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ABSTRACT

This report describes a program for advancing character education by expanding school goals of respect and responsibility and developing emotional intelligence by using the current curriculum. Targeted population consisted of elementary students in one first grade class and one fourth grade class, and middle school students in one sixth grade class, all located in a midwestern suburban setting. The problem of a school-wide lack of respect for adults and peers was documented through observations and data collected by four teachers, a principal, and other staff. Analysis of probable cause data show a past emphasis on academics with a lack of focus on emotional and social skills. Faculty and administration reported an increase in misbehavior by students in regular classrooms, special classes, lunchroom, and playground settings. Literature reviews revealed a national interest in students' declining respect for teachers and peers, indicating a lack of character education. A review of solution strategies shows the validity of character education in creating a positive learning environment. This resulted in the selection of an intervention of character building through the current curriculum. Through studying novels and songs, journaling, service projects, book buddies, and communication lab, students developed improved respect and interpersonal relationships. Post-intervention data indicate a decrease in inappropriate talking, and increases in respecting other's property, keeping hands and feet to oneself, and "being good." Fewer incidences of hurt feelings and ridicule from peers, as well as improvement in following school rules were observed. Appended are various sample forms. (Contains 16 references, 7 tables, and 6 figures.) (Author/BT)

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DEVELOPING CHARACTER EDUCATION THROUGH THE USE OF CURRENT CURRICULUM

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An Action Research Project Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the

School of Education in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Teaching and Leadership

SO 033 903

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ABSTRACT

This report describes a program for advancing character education by expanding school goals of respect and responsibility and developing emotional intelligence by using the current curriculum. The targeted population consisted of elementary students in one first grade class, one fourth grade class and a sixth grade class in a middle school, all located in a midwestern suburban setting. The problem of a school wide lack of respect for adults and peers was documented through observations and data collected by four teachers, a principal and other staff.

Analysis of probable cause data showed a past emphasis on academics with a lack of focus on emotional and social skills. Faculty and administration reported an increase in misbehavior by students in regular classrooms, special classes, lunchroom and playground settings. Reviews of literature revealed a national interest in students' declining respect for teachers and peers, indicating a lacking in character education.

A review of solution strategies showed the validity of character education in creating a positive learning environment. This resulted in the selection of an intervention of character building through the current curriculum. Through the study of novels, songs, journaling, service projects, book buddies, and Communication Lab, students developed improved respect and interpersonal relationships.

Post intervention data indicated a decrease in inappropriate talking, and increases in respecting others' property, keeping hands and feet to self, and caught being good. Researchers observed fewer incidences of hurt feelings, and ridicule from peers, as well as an improvement in following school rules.

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CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CONTEXT

General Statement of the Problem

The students of the targeted schools, an elementary school (site A) and a middle school (site B), exhibit a lack of positive character traits that interfere with academic growth. Evidence for the existence of the problem include parent and student surveys, teacher observations and checklists, and anecdotal records that describe student behavior and document problems in the classroom as well as discipline referrals to the principal.

Immediate Problem Context

Research is being conducted in two sites. They will be identified as sites A and B. The first grade, fourth grade, and music classrooms are located in site A. The sixth grade classroom is located in Site B. Both schools are part of the same school district.

Site A Description

The elementary school, site A, is a three-story brick building that was constructed in 1929. Since then, there have been four additions made to the original structure, the latest in 1995. It is centrally located in an upper-middle class neighborhood on a 10 acre piece of land. The land is shared by the school, the community and five residences. It includes a park on the north side of the building which is used for outdoor physical education classes and other community sporting activities, a fenced-in playground which is not part of the school grounds, and tennis courts.

Site A is located on the southeast corner of the land facing west. The front entrance is a set of double doors that enter into the kindergarten hallway. On the south side of the hall is an auditorium, the original gymnasium, and a kitchen. At the far end of the hall are two kindergarten classrooms with fireplaces, mantles, washrooms and coat rooms. On the north side of the hall is a special needs first grade and one of five regular first grade classes. The auditorium has a stage that is used throughout the day for music classes and an occasional assembly. The seating capacity is 267 which does not accommodate the student body that averages around 580 kindergarten through fifth graders. Therefore, for school-wide assemblies, the north gym, which was part of an addition built in 1995, is used.

Entering the building through these double doors brings one to the main hallway. This part of the building is mostly the same on all three stories. The halls have 15 foot ceilings which make them large and inviting. They contain classrooms, offices, washrooms and two separate staircases. On the first floor there are five first grade classrooms, four second grade classrooms, a gym, a special education resource room, an ESL room, and the office. The office is divided into four separate rooms: the main area where the secretary and assistant work, the principal's office that may also be used as a conference room, a small copy room , and the health office which is used by the health assistant and contains two cots and a washroom. The north gym is at the far end of the hall. The gym is used for physical education classes, lunch, assemblies, and after-school activities. It also has a door that leads outside to the park area.

The second floor has one second grade classroom, four third grade classrooms, a fourth grade, a self-contained special education class for second to fifth grade, a second grade resource room, and the Learning Resource Center which houses the school's library. The third floor has a small lounge/workroom, three fourth grade classrooms, four fifth grade classrooms, a resource

room for third through fifth grades and two classrooms for the primary and intermediate gifted programs.

The racial breakdown of our school is 93.7% White, 1.0% Black, 2.7% Hispanic, 2.5% Asian, and 0.2% Native Americans. The school has a higher rate of mobility than other schools in the district with a 12.5% rate compared to a district rate of 7.1%. The poverty rate is also the highest in the district with a 1.3% rate of low income families compared to a 0.8% rate districtwide (State School Report Card, 2000).

Site B Description

Site B is a middle school in a northwest suburban metropolitan area. The site consists of sixth, seventh and eighth grade students. Total student population of the school is 717. The ethnic mix of the population consists of 94.0% White, 0.3% Black, 1.7% Hispanic, and 4.0% Asian/Pacific Islander. The percentage of students with limited English proficiency is 1.0%. Low-income families represent 1.5% of the total population. Attendance at this site is 96.5% and the mobility rate is 8.7%. There is one reported chronic truant at this school. The total number of staff is 85, consisting of 68 teachers, six teacher assistants, 11 support staff, and two administrators.

The targeted school opened in August 1998. It is a new building, built after a citywide referendum passed on the first attempt. Prior to 1998, the community had one middle school, in which all of the seventh and eighth grade students in the district attended. The building sits on 10 acres of land. The back of the building faces a major street and the front of the building faces the parking lot. There is a grassy field on the west side of the building. The east side of the building is blacktop and contains the entrance for deliveries. At the northeast corner of the building is a school which houses early childhood programs and administrative offices.

Entering through the main door on the north side of the building there is a large foyer. To the right is the main office which consists of the front desk where visitors enter, the assistant principal's office, and the principal's office. The main office also houses a large conference room and a small conference room. The nurse's office adjoins the main office. The counseling offices are located off the foyer as well. The school employs a school counselor and two social workers. Between the two counseling offices is a room where students can relax.

The cafeteria, food services department, music department, and custodian offices are on the east side of the building. The gymnasium is at the south end of the building. The gymnasium includes boys' and girls' locker rooms, an office and two storage rooms.

Site B is a three-story building. Sixth graders occupy the third floor, seventh graders occupy the second floor, and eighth graders occupy the first floor. Exploratory and elective classes are held on all three floors. The west side of the building is shaped like the letter T. The core academic classrooms run north and south and consist of ten classrooms. Along the east and west corridors are classrooms for exploratory, elective, and resource classes.

Teachers work in teams or cores at Site B. Each core teacher is responsible for a particular academic area. All sixth grade teachers teach reading as well as four core classes. All seventh and eighth grade teachers teach an exploratory or elective class as well as four core classes. All classrooms are supplied with five laptop computers, a television and VCR unit.

On this site, many elective courses are available to students. These courses include technology, industrial arts, practical arts, fine arts including art and music, and foreign languages. After school clubs are offered to all students which include a variety of intramural programs, homework help, and a Student Government Association.

Classroom A

Classroom A is located on the west side of the building which makes for warm afternoons. There are five windows running along the west wall with wide ledges which can be used to display or store items. The north wall is covered with blackboards that are used for a Word Wall and and workshop task cards. The east side of the room has another blackboard, a small bulletin board, and two closets. The south side of the room is lined with four iMac computers, a printer, sink, and teacher's desk. There are 20 children in the classroom. They sit at four hexagon tables and share a basket of supplies. There is a small area on the floor that is used for whole group activities. Across the hall from this classroom is a boys' washroom and a drinking fountain. Next to the room is one of two staircases and an exit. These three things create additional noise in the hallway which can be a distraction to the students in the classroom.

The school is equipped with a security system. Staff members who choose to work on the weekends can check out key-packs to enter the building. During the day all doors are locked except the front door where there is a senior citizen volunteer who directs visitors to the office to sign in. To enter a locked door during the day teachers have a swipe card that unlocks the door.

Aside from the daily noise due to the location of Classroom A, there are advantages to its location. Being able to see former students and teachers as they pass by, and we have the added benefit of being able to use the nearby exit for outdoor physical education class. The location of the boys' washroom and drinking fountain allows one to supervise those areas more closely while still being able to see the rest of the class. The girls' washroom is at the opposite end of the hall.

Classroom B

Classroom B is a fourth grade classroom situated on the third floor of Site A. It is located at the end of the hallway, next to the boys' and girls' washrooms and the stairwell. An eastern exposure provides morning sun. The third floor was at one time an attic, then a storage space. A large part of the third floor was also used as a gymnasium. In the 1990's the third floor was converted to nine classrooms and a teacher's lounge. The room is air-conditioned, carpeted, has recessed fluorescent lighting, and cinder block walls. Entrance to the classroom is through a door in the northwest corner of the room. There is an additional interior door at the south end of the classroom which connects to the classroom next door.

There are 16 cabinets, eight drawers and an open double-shelf cabinet used for storage. In addition to 24 students' desks, there is a file cabinet and teacher's desk. A sink is located in the southeast corner. Directly above the east wall and counter are five rectangular shaped windows. In order to open and close the windows, one must either climb on top of the four-foot high counters, or use a long pole especially designed to push the windows open and pull them closed. On one part of the east wall, there are two small areas containing a counter with cabinets above and below. One of these areas is used as a social studies interest and resource center and the other area is used as a science center. A round table, seating four to six people, is at the back of the room. A table next to the desk holds the printer for the computers, and baskets for collecting homework assignments. Three tables along the back and side walls hold five iMac computers for student use. There is also have a computer on a counter next to the desk. Although wiring is in place for a monitor to be mounted to the upper right hand corner of the room, it will not be installed because of technology budget cuts.

With the existing furniture, and the desks in rows, the classroom is full. Because the

desks are freestanding, there is the flexibility of clustering them. The classroom space is adequate, but by no means ideal. Being next door to the only washrooms and drinking fountain can be very noisy. The nearby uncarpeted stairwell brings additional traffic by the classroom as well.

Classroom C

Classroom C is located in the kindergarten hallway on the south end of the school. On the north side of the room, there are only two windows in the classroom because the room is located in a corner of the building. On this wall is also an outside door, which must remain closed for safety precautions. There are numerous shelves below the counters under the windows, but there is nothing on the counters under these windows because of constant water leakage during rain and snow storms. A white plastic chain which hangs across the windows holds many stuffed animals used for music activities and birthday celebrations. A child-sized cabinet stands on the counter and attractively displays more stuffed animals. The shelves underneath the counters contain percussion instruments such as sand blocks, wood blocks, rhythm and lummi sticks, cow bells, goat toe nails and calf hooves, hand drums, bongos, cymbals, xylophones, glockenspiels, and an assortment of interesting sound effects instruments.

In the middle of the room are risers which provide the primary seating for students. There are only a few chairs for visiting adults or assistants. The flipFORM risers easily flip up and roll out of the way to free up space for movement. The classroom contains a beautiful dark wood piano, two tables, a conductor's music stand and a tall, gold stool.

The south wall is covered by a long blackboard flanked on the sides and top by bulletin boards. One bulletin board contains music rules, another contains a music staff and symbols, a third reveals monthly decorations and the fourth has a house mural that stands behind the stereo

cabinet. The stereo cabinet contains a turntable, five-disc CD player, double tape deck and receiver. At the end of this wall is a cabinet with open shelves on top and shelves with doors on the bottom. This space is a convenient place for puppets, decorative boxes, CDs and other teaching materials.

Against the west wall are several barred Orff instruments on rolling stands which makes set up of instruments convenient. A large bulletin board houses pictures of two composers that inspire students in a daily composer contest. Several other carts flank the room and house other small instruments, mallets, recorders and audio equipment.

The east wall of the music room is mostly made of glass, revealing the workroom which is used as a music office. In front of these windows are three carts. One cart is a brand new percussion cabinet that contains padded drawers and shelves for instruments. Another cart contains recorders and the third cart houses student textbooks. Inside the music office stands a coat rack which was handmade by a parent for a past school musical show. There are also a teacher desk, shelves and cabinets that store many music books, display items and teaching aids. There are two large windows. On the counter below sits a portable CD/radio/tape player which is used during class preparation time, for reviewing musical selections. A large bulletin board is convenient for posting schedules, calendars and personal items. On the south end of the office, a door leads to a small washroom.

Classroom D

Classroom D is large enough for 30 students to fit comfortably. The front wall is taken up by a dry-erase board and a chalkboard, with bulletin boards on either side. One bulletin board displays daily assignments while the other bulletin board displays math problem solving strategies. The back wall is taken up by a large bulletin board which typically displays student

work. Upon entering the room is a teacher work station that consists of a computer desk as well as a work desk. Countertops run alongside both walls as well. Under the countertops are open shelving on one side of the room and cabinets on the other side of the room. Student work is usually displayed on the cabinets as well as the bulletin boards. The arrangement of desks varies quite often, depending on the types of activities being performed. Students usually need to sit in an arrangement in which they can share ideas and provide assistance to each other.

School District

The district boasts a vision that the community works together for educational excellence and will always be growing, changing, and improving. Parents, teachers, administrators and community members participated in developing this long-range plan for the purpose of preparing students for the twenty-first century. The district consists of five elementary schools, two middle schools and one Early Education Center, with a total district enrollment of 4,200 students. Staffing these eight buildings are nearly 450 full and part-time teachers and support staff. Sixty-six percent of the teachers have master's degrees or above and the average teaching experience is 13 years. The average teacher's salary is $51,433. Average class size is 23 students in the elementary schools and 25 in the middle schools. The regular school year runs from the end of August through the second week of June.

The district is governed by the school board. The day-to-day operations are supervised by the district superintendent, the assistant superintendent for curriculum, the assistant superintendent for personnel, coordinator of pupil services and the senior principals in each building along with many support staff personnel. The average salary of an administrator in this district is $107,510.

Instruction is differentiated in all subjects which include language arts,(including spelling,

reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills), science, social studies, and math. French or Spanish is taught in every school beginning in second grade. Students receive physical education four times a week, music classes twice a week, and art once a week in all five of the kindergarten through fifth grade elementary buildings. In the two middle schools, students attend daily physical education classes. Students in sixth and seventh grades participate in one trimester of art and one trimester of music. Electives in art and music are offered to students in the eighth grade. Instrumental music is offered to elementary students starting in the fourth grade. Fifth through eighth graders are allowed the experience of participating in the award-winning band program. The middle school vocal groups have also won awards on the state and national levels. At the middle schools, sixth graders may choose from six exploratory courses offered. There are twenty electives offered to seventh and eighth graders. These programs include classes in the fine arts, science, practical arts, industrial arts, and technology.

A specialized program is offered for students who are considered academically gifted. Channels of Challenge begins with a primary enrichment program that services students in kindergarten through second grade. Third, fourth and fifth grade students who qualify for this program attend daily gifted classes in reading and/or math. For all other subjects, these students receive instruction in their general education classrooms. Middle school students continue specialized instruction through the Channels of Challenge program through the eighth grade.

Students with special needs in this district are serviced in a variety of ways. The district employs teachers to work in an assortment of settings. Resource classrooms are available for children who need assistance in specific subjects. Students with highly specialized needs attend self-contained classes in some of the buildings. Special needs kindergarten students, children with pervasive developmental disorder, and children who are physically challenged might attend self-

contained special education classes. Although many students attend self-contained special education classrooms, each child is assigned a general education homeroom and is mainstreamed for as many classes as possible, depending on the individual student's abilities. In this district, screening, diagnostic testing, instructional and support services are available to all residents who range in age from birth to twenty-one.

The technology goal of the district is to incorporate computer technology into every classroom and curriculum. All of the district's schools are fully computerized and networked. Each building staffs a computer technologist who aids in setup, maintenance, and advising of computer classes and programs. By the end of eighth grade, all students should be proficient in keyboard skills, word processing, Internet usage, graphics, spreadsheets, and the use of technology for giving quality presentations.

Summer interim classes are available for elementary and middle school students. A variety of classes offer basic skills review, as well as enrichment opportunities, such as computer, arts and crafts, drama, singing, foreign language and sign language.

The district offers child care programs at a school-based site. Other parent paid programs include before school care, extended day kindergarten, an after school program, and an optional lunch program which allows elementary students to stay at school during the lunch hour. Cafeteria lunches are offered to middle school students. There is also a summer child care program for students entering kindergarten through sixth grade.

This district welcomes and encourages community involvement in each school. Senior citizens can receive tax relief by volunteering during the school day. Parent organizations are an essential part of the district's team. They work to raise money, provide a link between between home and school, and network among schools in the district.

The Surrounding Communities

Community A

Community A is a high-income, predominantly white collar city. An established community since the 1830's, the town became incorporated as a village in 1873, and incorporated as a city in 1910.

The community's government is made up of a mayor, city manager, city council, and 14 alderman elected from seven wards. These elected officials work together with the city manager (an appointed position) in a home-rule community. This gives the city government the authority to act independently on matters of a legislative nature. The city employs 286 people including those employed at the public library.

The population of 37,775 occupies 7.1 square miles. Forty-eight percent of the city's land is residential, while five percent is commercial. Parks and open spaces comprise 24% of the land. The population density ranks in the 86th percentile nationally with 5,450 persons per square mile. Over the last five years the annualized growth rate is -0.1%.

The community's close proximity to a large metropolitan city and major airport attract many white collar professionals. Access to different types of public transportation as well as to expressways make for a convenient commute to the major city as well as to nearby communities and suburbs. The average travel time to work is approximately 26 minutes. (Baird and Warner Real Estate)

Several large employers in this community provide a variety of jobs. Most residents work in positions that fall into the categories of professional, managerial, sales, and administrative support.

As of 2001, the estimated average income for families with children is $118,383. This

average places the community in the 95th percentile, nationally. The median income is $77, 018, with the average single family home value estimated at $316,999. Twenty-three percent of the population live in multifamily and townhouse dwellings. The total number of households in this community stands at 14,288.

It is a well established community with traditional, conservative values. Residents, after finishing their college education, often return to this city to raise their families. As a result, there are a wide range of ages, with the average age being 41.6 years. Of the 66.8% of the population who are married, 25.5% have children. Those who are single with no children comprise 30.5% of the population, while 2.7% of that single population have children. The percentage of adults who are graduates of high school is 89.4%. Of that group, 37.4% are college graduates.

Community A places a great deal of importance on its citizens and the betterment of community life. A civic orchestra, art gallery, art center, art league, fine arts society and a historic theater are part of the culture. Service organizations include the Center for Concern, Citizen's Patrol, Human Needs Task Force, Youth Services Commission, as well as a senior citizen center, and numerous other civic organizations.

The community offers many amenities such as an extensive park district program with activities for all ages including a modern recreation center, four public swimming pools, three outdoor tennis areas, an indoor ice skating rink, and numerous baseball and soccer fields. The building of a skateboard park is currently being undertaken. A private country club located in the north side of town, contains an 18 hole golf course, swimming pool, and tennis courts.

The public library is situated in the downtown business district and occupies a 37,000 square foot building. It is part of the North Suburban Library System and houses 232,000 items with a yearly circulation rate of 625,771. Five elementary schools, two middle schools, two high

schools, and three parochial schools are located here. Community A has 17 houses of worship.

Community B

A portion of Community B is included in the school district. The children living in this specific area attend the school.

The community has a population of 28,384. Settled in the early 1800's, the first school in the community opened in 1838. The city itself was incorporated in 1899. Commerce included farming, blacksmithing and hospitality. Land area is approximately six square miles and is home to more than 10,800 households.

The average home value is $190,436, while the median family income is $55,987. The median age in this community is 45 years old.

The government of this city is comprised of a village president and six trustees who are elected at-large. In addition to these individuals, there is an appointed clerk and appointed village manager.

The public library is brand new and very convenient to the school although it is in a neighboring community. Over 200,000 items are housed here with over 690,000 loans yearly. The Public Access Catalog includes 24 public libraries in its system. A computer lab and children's department both have membership in the North Suburban Library System.

The village boasts an historical museum, one of the largest in the area. Full park district programs are provided for people of all ages.

The community reaches out to its citizens in a number of different ways. There are senior housing facilities and a senior agency which provide a wide variety of activities for its residents. A full time consumer fraud agency is located in the city as well as a youth agency which helps young people find employment. There are 11 bus routes which employ a "no fare" courtesy bus

service.

Numerous businesses, restaurants, well known store chains, and a medium sized mall are part of this busy community. The city's civic pride, innovation, and community spirit are evident throughout.

National Context of the Problem

The lack of positive social skills by students in the classroom is of concern to educators at the state and national level. In the 1950's, elementary teachers considered behavior issues such as students chewing gum in class and cutting in line to be serious. Today educators are faced with an upsurge in crime, drug abuse, theft, and cheating on school campuses. In addition to these behaviors, there is an increase in lying and suicide among students. This has prompted educators, politicians, and parents alike to address the problem of how to integrate values instruction into the curriculum framework. "A prime responsibility of the schools is not only to make children smart, but to make them smart and good" (Ronald S. Thomas, 1996).

Proof that there is interest in the values education movement is that there are presently over 30 states in the United States that have received O.S. Department of Education character education state grants. Legislation relating to character education is presently in place in 16 states (Indiana Department of Education. Partners for Good Citizenship: Parents, Schools, and Communities, 1999). With increased accountability placed on schools to score as high as possible in academic areas, there is now the added responsibility for educators to provide instruction for their students in the area of developing positive character qualities.

Parents have also acknowledged a need for character education. A Gallop poll taken in 1998 reported that "84% of public school parents want moral values taught in schools. Furthermore, 68% want schools to develop standards of right and wrong" (EIC Issue Papers

1998). In 1997, President Clinton made an official Call to Action for American Education by challenging schools to teach good values and citizenship in the classroom. Society recognizes the need for programs that address the problems of students as they relate to developing positive social skills. The challenge to find the solution is clearly in the hands of educators.

Using the current curriculum for improving social skills is suggested by prominent educators. "Integrate social values education with the regular academic aims of the curriculum" (Nucci, 2001). "Use personal models--heroes--in history, fiction, and current events to exemplify and encourage emulation of particular virtues or desirable traits of character" (Leming 1996; Lickona 1991). The goal is to develop students' strong independent character. Too often character education deals with promoting good manners and obeying rules and authority figures. According to Schape, Schaeffer and McDonnell, the ultimate goal is to teach all people in the school to treat one another with kindness and respect (Schape, Schaeffer and McDonnell, 9/12/01).

CHAPTER 2

PROBLEM DOCUMENTATION

Problem Evidence

In order to document the need for character education in our schools, journal entries, student and parent surveys, and teacher observations over a three week period of time were noted (Appendices A - C). Behavior problems were addressed by written behavior warnings, detentions, parental contact, and student/principal conferences. Positive approaches to discipline at Site A included a Communication Lab program and classroom meetings. Site B used an emotional intelligence program. Because Site A and Site B had instituted plans for discipline problems, it was evident that there were behavior problems that needed to be addressed.

Of the 22 students in classroom A, 25 students in classroom B, and 23 students in classroom D, a total of 55 students were involved in this process over the three week time period. Classroom C was a general music education classroom, and the process involved the same 44 students at Site A, therefore the baseline data was not repeated for this classroom. All data for the music classroom was incorporated into the other two classes at Site A. Summaries showing the number of incidents and behavior categories are presented in Tables 1, 2, and 3.

Table 1 - Classroom A

Categories and Number of Behavior Incidents September 10 through September 28

Behavior Category	Number of incidents	Number of students
Talks at inappropriate times	50	16
Disrespectful of others' property	17	10
Does not keep hands, feet, and objects to self	28	10
Caught being good	35	19

Table 2 - Classroom B

Categories and Number of Behavior Incidents September 10 through September 28

Behavior Category	Number of incidents	Number of students
Talks at inappropriate times	30	11
Disrespectful of others' property	5	4
Does not keep hands, feet, and objects to self	2	1
Caught being good	8	7

Table 3 - Classroom D

Categories and Number of Behavior Incidents September 10 through September 28

Behavior Category	Number of incidents	Number of students
Talks at inappropriate times	22	8
Disrespectful of other's property	12	5
Does not keep hands, feet, and objects to self	8	4
Caught being good	10	5

Of the 227 incidents recorded on the teacher observation checklist during the three week period (Appendix C), 77 percent were inappropriate behaviors in the classroom or during the school day. Twenty-three percent of incidents recorded were appropriate and positive behaviors. A further analysis of the teacher behavior checklist data indicated that out of the 65 children observed, 80 percent were responsible for the number of incidents.

Upon examination of the data in tables 1, 2 and 3, the need for character education is confirmed. The category, talking at inappropriate times, showed the most incidents of negative behavior. The second most frequent problem behavior was noted in the category, doesn't keep hands, feet, and objects to self. The category, disrespectful of others' property, showed the least amount of negative behaviors. The positive category, caught being good, showed a fewer number of students were observed behaving appropriately.

It was noted that the first grade class exhibited more negative behaviors than the fourth and sixth grade students. It was also noted that the first grade children demonstrated more positive behaviors than the other students.

From this analysis, the researchers concluded that the younger students would benefit from an early intervention in character education. In the fourth grade classroom, 3 out of the 22 students observed were responsible for 57 % of negative behaviors. These students will be targeted as primary subjects to observe their progress. In the sixth grade class, 3 students exhibited 57 % of all negative behaviors. These students will also be targeted during this intervention. In the music classroom, talking at inappropriate times, will be the category most observed during this intervention.

We have noted that talking at inappropriate times was not only a problem in all the targeted sites, but was noted in all special subject classes as well. The music specialist concurred

with these results because of the excessive amount of inappropriate talking during class. This problem had also been noted by other special subject area teachers. Classes traveling in the hallways have been disruptive and disrespectful to the learning going on in the classrooms.

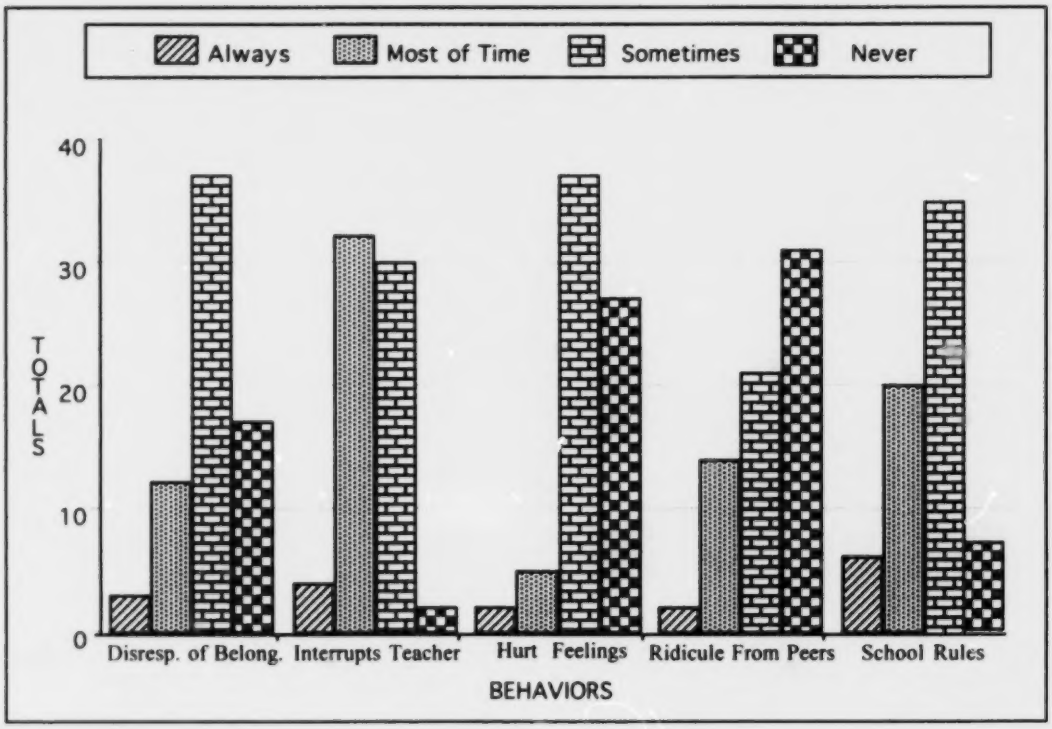
Last year at Site A, the principal tallied the number of incidents that involved students sent to the office for behavior problems. These problems included hitting, fighting, inappropriate language, showing disrespect for other people's property, and ignoring authority of paraprofessionals and student patrols. In the tallies, the principal separated the incidents according to gender and grade level. Upon studying the results of these records, the researchers concluded that the boys at Site A were involved in more incidents and required more disciplinary measures than the girls. Research in the literature review suggested that all students would benefit from a program that taught character education through the everyday curriculum, therefore the targeted students will include boys and girls. Table 4 shows the tallies from the principal's report.

Table 4 - Principal's Tally

Number of incidents of students sent to the office for discipline

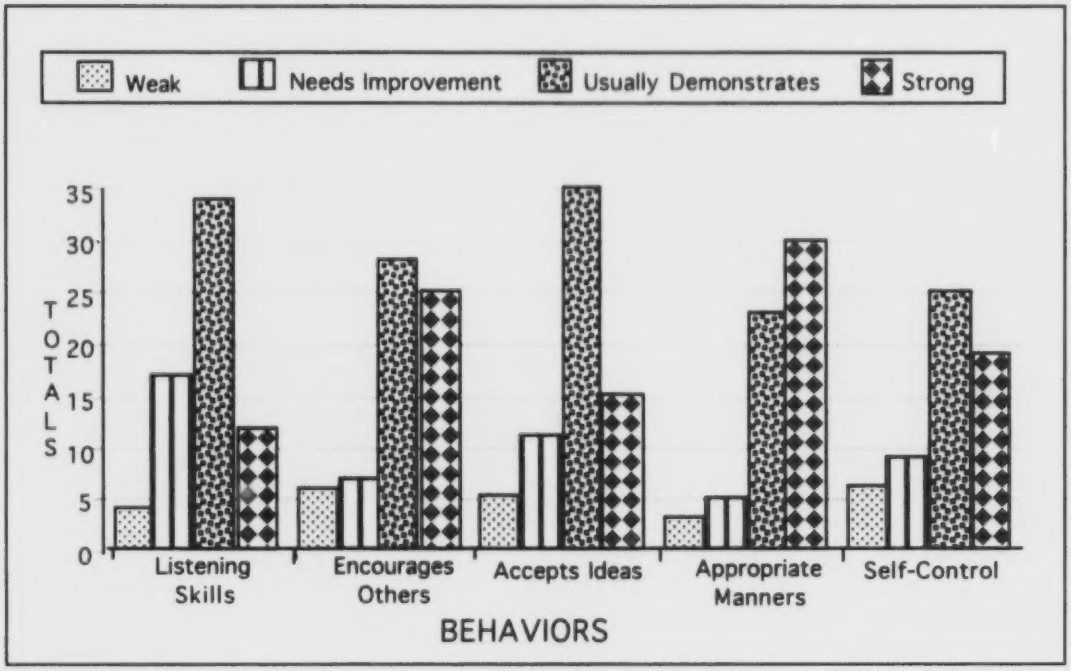
Grade Level	Boys	Girls
Kindergarten	13	0
First Grade	15	0
Second Grade	28	8
Third Grade	11	0
Fourth Grade	131	24
Fifth Grade	74	6

Student Survey



Another documentation was a student survey (Appendix A). Students were asked to rate the following behaviors observed in other students: disrespecting others' belongings, interrupting the teacher, hurting others' feelings, fearing ridicule from peers, and breaking school rules. The rating scale was always, sometimes, most of the time, and never. The results showed that interrupting the teacher occurs frequently. It appeared that students needed to practice self-control. Although most of the observable behaviors did not fall into the category of always, the fact that there were high rates of these behaviors occurring sometimes showed that students needed to work on these areas. Most students did not observe high rates of hurt feelings or ridicule from peers, which indicated that students possess an internal awareness of respect.

Parent Survey



A third documentation was a parent survey (Appendix B). The surveys were sent home and completed anonymously by the parents or legal guardian of the children participating in the study. Parents were asked to rate their children with one being the weakest and four being the strongest. They rated their children in the following areas: listening skills, encouraging others, accepting others' ideas, using appropriate manners, and practicing self-control. The results showed that most parents believed their children did a good job of encouraging others but felt they lacked self-control. Areas that needed the most improvement were self-control, accepting others' ideas, and listening skills.

PROBABLE CAUSES

The literature suggested that the violent behavior of students has given educators, parents, politicians, and even businessmen pause to reflect on why and how some children in our society have gotten so out of control (Schaeffer, 1999).

Statistics from a 1997 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System survey stated that 10% of our youth carry guns. In 1990, a Washington Post survey found rape arrests of 13-year-old boys had increased by 200 percent. Another recent national poll stated that 47% of middle and high school students surveyed admitted to stealing from a store in the last 12 months. Wayne Dosick in "Golden Rules" listed the five top problems as cited by elementary school teachers. In the 1950's, the top problems were talking out of turn, gum chewing, making noise, running, and cutting in line. Although these are still problems today, the top five current problems listed by elementary teachers in the 1990's were drug and alcohol abuse, guns and knives in school, pregnancy, suicide, and rape (TeachingValues.com, 2001).

Children are committing more heinous crimes than ever before. A hundred years ago, crimes such as petty theft or truancy prompted the creation of a children's courtroom in a large midwestern city. Today the juvenile court system is dealing with vicious murders committed by nine and ten year olds (Cloud, 1998).

No one will dispute the fact that young people today are bolder when it comes to shoplifting, cheating, lying, and drinking. Students readily admit to participating in these kinds of activities and behaviors (Hench and Brandell, 1998). People who cheat in school are likely to cheat as adults. Surveys by various groups have shown that there is widespread cheating in schools. As many as 80 percent of teens surveyed say they have cheated , many admitting that it did not seem like such a big deal (Wetzstein, 2001).

"Emotional intelligence appears to be in startling decline among American children. This across-the-board drop in children's emotional intelligence is in many ways a more troubling trend than a dip in the SAT. Deficits in EQ are linked with a range of social perils such as dropping out of school, fighting, delinquency, drug use, teen pregnancy, and eating disorders. The rate of decline in EQ was the same for all, privileged and impoverished children alike (Corpus Christi Caller Times, 1995).

Bullying is a common problem in schools across the country. Gina Greenlee tells about her fifth grade experiences with Frankie, the classroom bully. Teachers chuckled and said he had a crush on her, but they did not see the times Frankie pushed Gina down the stairs, punched and kicked her, grabbed her private body parts, and mercilessly taunted her every day at school. Gina was glad when Frankie was fatally electrocuted later that year while trespassing on private property. As extreme as this story appears, Gina's experience of terror at the hands of a bully caused her to feel a sense of relief at his death (Greenlee, 2001).

It could be that aggressive behavior in children is so ingrained that it is difficult to change (Johnson, 2001). Scott Poland also said that bullying is not going to be easy to change. Several of the students who have resorted to shooting at school say they felt persecuted, bullied, threatened, or injured (Morris, 2001).

In an effort to understand what is happening, a common thread has emerged. "Young perpetrators feel disconnected and alienated. Many do not have meaningful relationships with their parents or other adults, which leaves them to cultivate misguided habits and directions on their own" (Elias, Lantieri, Patti, Shriver, Walberg, Weissberg, Zins, 2001).

Youth programs that address issues such as AIDS, teenage pregnancy, substance abuse, and violence fail to successfully meet the needs of students because they are presented in a

disjointed manner. Those programs that are short term rather than "comprehensive and sustained", fail to adequately deal with the serious issues that plague our schools and their students. Programs such as these tend to be introduced haphazardly with no real direction or coordination among staff. Consequently, their effectiveness is difficult to measure. Negative effects result from a fragmented approach. The fragmentation occurs when 10 or 20 staff members work on similar issues without any coordination or expertise. When this occurs few of the prevention programs last more than a few years. Also, many initiatives are reactive rather than preventative, and by the time the work is begun, the problem is well out of hand (Elias, Lantieri, Patti, Shriver, Walberg, Weissberg, Zins, 2001).

Children are often left alone by their working parents and because there is no one to direct them, they will turn to television, the Internet, and even gangs to occupy their time. Communities often do not or cannot provide the support or the positive influences that can come from healthy activities. Watching television has taken over first place in the lives of school children. Every year children spend 1500 hours in front of the TV, and only 33 hours in meaningful conversations with their parents.

A disturbing cause for the decline in students' behavior is that today's schools can be added to the list of causes as well. As society has changed, schools have not always kept step with the changes (Schaeffer, 1999).

Former President George H.W. Bush argued that schools needed to play a more decisive role in moral education. A serious downfall has been the "values clarification movement where students invent their own morality from scratch, and all choices are equally valid" (Ryan and Bohlin, 1999).

The country has only to look at the rise in school shootings, binge drinking, cheating, and

bullying to come to the conclusion that these behaviors are partly attributed to the "culture of the school". In order to create a new school culture, it will be necessary to re-implement what historically was the schools' primary job; "the formation of character among the children in their care" (Ryan and Bohlin, 1999).

Instead of emphasizing decision making, there is more a of a need for educators to focus on character education. Schools are now faced with "some 16,000 crimes per school day as well as an increase in crimes which are committed just for kicks" (Kilpatrick, 1993). Fewer qualified people are willing to put up with these kinds of negative behaviors in school. Historically, teachers frequently left the profession because they could make more money doing something else. But today, teachers may drop out because they fear "student misbehavior".

Well intentioned therapists help children develop self-esteem so that they will have the confidence to make good decisions. However, the backlash of that philosophy is that children conclude that any choice they make is the right one. Hence, decisions to use drugs or engage in sexual activity among students is on the rise (Kilpatrick, 1993).

Michael Josephson, founder of Character Counts, said that too many kids are not getting character education from their parents. He believes that the schools must teach it or the kids will not learn it (Oglesby, 2001).

Respect, or rather the lack of it, has been cited as the root cause for many of the problems educators face today. Sara Lawrence Lightfoot offers her insight into this problem in her book, Respect. She says there is a real problem with what our society really values (Lightfoot, 1999).

Gregory Valde commented that there are too few soulful schools. A soulful school is one that has a moral center, that fosters a sense of depth, purpose, and connection. Too many of our schools are hollow, and stand for things that do not move us. They center on experiences that

teach the value of prestige or money. Valde states that schools send the wrong messages to kids. Cheer leading, football, and the prom are values too often imbedded in our public education. Children learn to value winning more than fairness, owning more than caring, efficiency more than celebration. If that is true in our schools, then, says Valde, we have failed to instill the most basic of principles. If schools undermine morality by failing to instill a greater purpose, achievement is undermined as well. Schools have been known to place achievement over celebration, intelligence over morality and money over compassion. Without a moral or spiritual center, work and standards by which we live become mere games to beat the system (Valde, 1999).

In summary, research showed that students are involved in detrimental behavior such as lying, cheating, carrying weapons, becoming pregnant, using and selling drugs, fighting, joining gangs, and dropping out of school. It is clear that some children are out of control. Many of these students lack parental involvement in their lives. Parents are often not available and frequently leave children to fend for themselves, which makes children feel insecure. Many children spend countless hours watching television or playing video games. Children of divorced parents can be confused about where they live and who is in control of their world. Research suggests that schools also contribute to discipline problems. Many schools do not provide a "soulful" environment or instill values which results in children who lack respect, who bully one another, and children who are out of control. Children with discipline problems often exhibit difficulty learning in the classroom. The question remains, who is responsible for the character education of our nation's children?

In the targeted school district, there are similar problems that have plagued our entire nation. Children in the district have set fires and have been caught carrying weapons. Often, students complain about other students bullying them, both at the elementary level and the

middle school. The researchers have witnessed countless acts of bullying and disrespect toward their classmates. Because of these problems, the targeted elementary school staff has instituted a stricter discipline policy including behavior warnings and detentions. The middle school regularly implements school-wide emotional intelligence assemblies and follow-up activities. It is hoped that through the implementation of these plans, student behavior will be impacted in a positive way.

CHAPTER 3

THE SOLUTION STRATEGY

Literature Review

"The function of an educator is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically... Intelligence, plus character - that is the goal of true education." (Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., 1966).

State mandates are creating challenges for educators as faculty members and administrators of schools attempt to implement formal character education programs. Defining character education, fostering support of programs from parents and faculty, implementing curriculum materials, and teaching character effectively are the challenges faced in developing a current curriculum for a character education program (Milson, 2000). Forty-eight out of fifty states are currently in the process or have already completed state educational standards which address character education (Nielsen, 1998).

Federal and state governments, boards of education, and professional organizations have increasingly been providing support for character education. States are endorsing the movement with legislation coming from both the United States House of Representatives and the United

States Senate. At least 24 states and the District of Columbia have enacted legislation as of August 2000, and 24 other states have considered such legislation during the past two years (Nielsen, 1998).

States have approached the issue in different ways. Arkansas, Georgia, and South Dakota specifically require public schools to teach character education and specify which traits should be taught, which programs to use, and how much time should be set aside for implementing them into the school day. North Carolina and Oklahoma preserve local control by encouraging or granting permission to local school boards to start their own programs (Nielsen, 1998).

Although there have been disagreements over the appropriate goals and methods for character education, several propositions have been offered by those who advocate it. Some believe that teachers should teach good character traits explicitly (Ryan, 1986). Ryan says that teaching character traits outwardly allows for more class discussions, awareness of others' feelings, and a deeper relation to wanting to become good characters.

Some educators believe that for such instruction to be effective, it must occur within a positive school climate and students must have opportunities away from the classroom to practice good character through service programs, classroom decision making, and cooperative learning (Lickona, 1993, Wynne, 1997). Service programs allow students to develop caring attitudes beyond the classroom. The community in which students live provides a variety of service opportunities for students to participate. Once teachers identify the needs in the community, students can choose in what they would like to be active. Teachers can use classroom time to create gift baskets for the community hospital, greeting cards for the nursing home, or tokens of appreciation for the fire department. Service activities can also take place outside of the classroom. Helping the elderly rake leaves or holding a bake sale to raise money

for a charitable organization are just two ways students can be part of the service program. Students become positive role models to inspire altruistic behavior in others. To develop character, children need opportunities for moral action. By grappling with real life challenges, children develop a practical understanding of cooperation and respect (Lickona, 1993).

Classroom decision making is reinforced when students are asked to resolve issues that trouble them. Weekly class meetings can serve as a resource for students to learn strategies to constructively resolve conflicts. Students need to understand that personal growth occurs when there is conflict. Class meetings can help students understand the basic needs for belonging, power, fun, and freedom. When students are aware that these four needs underlie the problem at hand, self-worth can be nurtured and all parties involved can grow from the experience. Weekly classroom meetings can take the form of a relaxed environment where issues are dealt with openly. Students can bring up concerns anonymously through writing or directly at the classroom meeting. Students often have suggestions for resolving problems and these solutions are explored and discussed the following week to see if changes have occurred. Students are responsible for making the classroom a good place to be and learn (Lickona, 1993).

Cooperative learning is used to develop students' appreciation of others. Cooperative learning groups foster higher-level thinking and teach social skills explicitly. Characteristics of a classroom which incorporate cooperative learning include teacher focus on group interaction, students sharing roles, evaluation of individual contributions to group goals, and heterogeneous grouping of students. Students understand that they must rely on others to accomplish a common goal (Bellanca and Fogarty, 1991). Students are also exposed to the perspectives of others who are different from them, therefore, helping to develop the ability to work with others toward a common goal (Lickona, 1993). The framework for cooperative learning consists of six

phases of the small group process. The first phase includes building trust within the group. The second phase is the teaching of social skills explicitly. The third phase is to begin to think together cooperatively. The next phase includes getting students to problem solve and settle disagreements. The fifth phase develops continuous high performance from the groups. The final phase of cooperative learning consists of restructuring the entire school so that all students can take part in cooperative learning (Bellanca and Fogarty, 1991).

Partnerships with family and community institutions support and amplify the values taught in the classroom. Schools recruit parents by letting them know that the school considers them their child's first and foremost important moral teacher. Schools can give parents specific ways to reinforce values the school is trying to teach. Some ways parents can reinforce values at home include spending time with their child talking about what is happening at school, taking an interest in what their child brings home from school, and opening up dialogue with their child concerning issues that have a direct effect on the life of their child. Newsletters sent home from the school informing parents of specific developmental stages and how to handle new situations can also be helpful to parents. Schools can also seek the help of the community, churches, businesses, local government, and the media in promoting values (Lickona, 1993).

Cravens Middle School in Atlanta, Georgia is a school that was selected for a case study as they faced the challenge of developing a curriculum for a character education program (Milson, 2000). In 1997, parents and teachers were concerned about the transition that students faced as they moved from the elementary school to the middle school. Together, they began developing a character education program in hopes of creating a more courteous and caring community of students in the middle school. (Milson, 2000). A committee of parents and teachers decided to create a homegrown program rather than to purchase a commercially produced curriculum. The

development of the program was influenced by the conceptual work of Thomas Lickona, the organizational structure of a character education program in a neighboring county, and curriculum content was developed by the teachers in Craven School.

The committee first developed a conceptual framework upon which the program was built and then established a model for delivering the program. The model involves focusing on a specific character trait during each week of the school year. The committee surveyed parents to identify what character traits they believed were important for students to develop and practice in school. Traits such as honesty, responsibility, compassion, courtesy, and politeness were cited by many parents as important. Homeroom/advisory time at the beginning of the day was designated as "Character Education Time" and a calendar was created to assign a trait to each week of the school year. A series of five activities, one for each day of the week, was designed to explore each trait. Mondays began with a definition of the trait. Tuesdays allowed for student discussion of how they could demonstrate that trait. Wednesdays allowed for a true story about someone who demonstrated that trait regularly. On Thursdays, students read a fictional story in which a character exhibits or fails to exhibit a trait. Review of the activities of the week occurred on Fridays with such activities as skits and assemblies. Parents and teachers were aware that character education should not only fit into twenty minute time slots but also be built into subject areas and attempted to be integrated throughout the school day.

"To educate a person in mind and not in morals is to educate a menace to society" (Theodore Roosevelt, 1905). Although the Craven's model appears to have support and beneficial results, critics find two areas problematic. First, critics say that the 'trait of the week' approach is ineffective in that it will not yield lasting results (Kohn, 1997, Lockwood, 1991). If it is not used throughout every day the meaning does not mean as much to the children (Kohn,

1997). A second problem is the lack of staff training. Character education is a more complex responsibility for a teacher than implementing a daily lesson from a notebook.

At Atlantic Elementary School, a public school in Cocoa, Florida students are known as "kids for character" (Extrom, 2000). Parents and educators in the community are claiming that the school's character education program has brought about a significant change. Attendance is up, incidents requiring discipline are down, and children are reminding each other about proper behavior.

Other schools all over the country are experiencing similar results as they see significant changes in student behavior as a result of comprehensive character education programs. A study conducted by the University of South Carolina's Center of Child and Family Studies shows that nine out of ten South Carolina school administrators reported improvement in student attitudes and behavior, and 60% reported better academic performance when character programs were used. "The true test of civilization is not the census, nor the size of cities, nor the crops - no, but the kind of man the country turns out" (Emerson, 1841).

Schools teaching character education typically begin with an advisory group of policy makers, educators, parents, and community members organized on the state or local level. The group either designs a program or adopts one form a character education organization offering such services. Character education programs may look very different from one another because schools tailor their programs to fit their specific needs. One school may set aside a certain amount of time to teach about and reflect on character traits, while another might integrate character education into the entire educational experience. Many schools not only teach the definition of each trait, but also how to model them. Character education programs usually require all teachers, counselors, principals, and secretaries to exhibit the character traits so that

students can model their behavior after these authority figures.

Lickona says that although no one formula exists for a successful character education program, most national organizations suggest guidelines such as:

1. Reinforce core values throughout a student's school experience
2. Give opportunities for students to demonstrate the character traits
3. Provide leadership and expect commitment from both staff and students
4. Recruit parents and community members as partners
5. Evaluate and analyze the effectiveness of the program

The goal is for these traits to become internalized into a child.

One of the biggest struggles schools face today while trying to implement a character education program is to be able to adequately define and develop good character. Having a clear definition allows schools to have a better understanding of their goals. Character must encompass the cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects of morality. Good character consists of knowing, desiring, and doing good. Schools need to help children understand the core values, adopt or commit to them, and then act upon them in their own lives (Lickona, 1993).

Once there is a clear understanding of character, schools then need a comprehensive approach to developing it. Schools should look at themselves through moral lenses and determine how everything that occurs in their school directly relates to the moral and character of the students. A comprehensive approach requires teacher to:

1. Act as a caregiver, mentor, and to model positive social behavior through class discussions and one-on-one guidance
2. Create a moral community helping students know, respect, and care about one another and feel like a valued member of the group

3. Practice moral discipline using the creation and enforcement of rules, voluntary compliance with said rules, and developing respect for others
4. Create a democratic classroom by allowing students to make the classroom decisions and give the responsibility of making the classroom a good place to be and learn without fear
5. Teach values through the current curriculum using the content of academic subjects as vehicles for teaching character education
6. Use cooperative learning to develop students' appreciation of others and the ability to work toward common goals
7. Encourage reflection through journals, discussions, and reading
8. Teach conflict resolution so that students learn how to solve problems fairly and without force (Lickona, 1993).

Outside the classroom the school as a whole needs to be responsible for:

1. Fostering the caring beyond the classroom through the use of positive role models and community service at every grade level
2. Create a positive and moral culture in the school that supports and extends the values taught in the classroom
3. Letting parents know that they are considered their child's first and most important teacher of morals and recruit them and other community members as partners in character education (Lickona, 1993).

Kohn (1997) believes that there are two kinds of character education: broad and narrow. The broad kind is good; the narrow is bad. In the broad sense character education refers to whatever the school needs to do to help children grow into good people. Kohn thinks that too

much emphasis is put on forming individual character instead of transforming educational structures. Meeting student needs increases the likelihood that they will care about others. In order to do that, schools must be turned into caring communities. In the narrow sense, Kohn says that extrinsic motivation is used to move students toward harder work ethics and to make them do what they are told. The preferred method of instruction in this narrow approach is drilling students in specific behaviors rather than engaging them in deep reflection about 'what should be' (Lickona, 1998).

For the most part, Kohn's recommendation of a broad approach has been promoted by the leader in character education, the Character Education Partnership. Its membership includes groups such as the American Federation of Teachers, the National Education Association, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, the National Association of Elementary School Principals, the National School Boards Association, the National PTA, and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (Lickona, 1998).

Lickona's response to the belief that specific teachings of character education are not th best approach rely heavily on the teachings of the leading character education organizations and their "Eleven Principles of Effective Character Education." (Character Education Partnership, 1995). These "Eleven Principles" are:

1. Character education promotes core ethical values as the basis of good character.
2. "Character" must be comprehensively defined to include thinking, feeling, and behavior.
3. Effective character education requires an intentional, proactive, and comprehensive approach that promotes the core values in all phrases of

life.

4. The school must be a caring community.
5. To develop character, students need opportunities for moral action.
6. Effective character education includes a meaningful and challenging academic curriculum that respects all learners and helps them succeed.
7. Character education should strive to develop students' intrinsic motivation.
8. The school staff must become a learning and moral community in which all share responsibility for character education and attempt to adhere to the same core values that guide the education of students.
9. Character education requires moral leadership from both staff and students.
10. The school must recruit parents and members as full partners in the character building effort.
11. Evaluation of character education should assess the character of the school, how the school staff members function as character educators, and the extent to which students manifest good character (Character Education Partnership, 1995).

In contrast to the broad approach, Kohn says that narrow character education is "tantamount to indoctrination." Lickona responded by saying that there are two kinds of indoctrination: broad which includes reasoned reflection and narrow which excludes reflection. Kohn believes that contemporary character education is dominated by the narrow approach - moral training without moral reflection. Lickona believes that Kohn excluded many articles and books that advocate a comprehensive approach to character education and he fails to cite any of the schools that are offering a more comprehensive approach (Lickona, 1998).

Another criticism from Kohn comes in the weekly or monthly virtue lessons. He says they are unlikely to have any positive effects on children. In fact, there are a number of programs using these approached that have already achieved positive, even dramatic, results for schools nationwide. Approaches such as these are raising test scores, reducing suspensions, and leading to fewer discipline problems (Lickona, 1998).

Music is thought to enhance many kinds of learning. Hazrat Inayat Khan believes that a person can obtain spiritual perfection through music. He states that if rightly understood, music can uplift the soul and inspire. Theories also suggest that when studying new material, which would involve left-brain activity, music can awaken the intuitive right brain so that learning would become a complete process. Using music to teach values and character education should help to heal and transform students' behavior. Ancient writings attest to the power of music to calm, inspire, and heal (Khan, 1993).

Project Objectives and Processes

As a result of the collaboration of literature, music, and our current curriculum during the period of October 2001 to January 2002, the first, fourth, and sixth graders from the targeted schools will become more aware of respect and responsibility and why these qualities are important. The students will be able to understand and exhibit a deeper respect for themselves and others. These qualities will be measured through teacher, parent, and peer observation. The students will understand and show greater responsibility for their behavior and academic achievement. Respect and responsibility will be measured through teacher, parent, and self-evaluation. In order to accomplish the project objectives, the following processes are necessary:

1. Pre-and-post surveys of students and parents will be disseminated, which will serve to measure the improvement of student's understanding and

changed behavior relating to respect and responsibility (Appendices A and B).

2. A checklist will be used to measure the amount of respectful and disrespectful behaviors (Appendix C) .
3. Group activities, role playing, music, and journaling will focus students' attention on respect and responsibility.
4. Peer interviews will enable the students to discuss their feelings and attitudes about respect and responsibility (Appendix D).

Project Action Plan

WEEK 1

Music classes: The first and fourth grade students will be introduced to the topic of developing positive character traits. Students will sing "From the Inside Out" and discuss how to solve problems. Students will also sing the school theme song, which covers respect and responsibility. Afterwards, students will be introduced to the bulletin board entitled "Great Character". They will participate in a discussion about what constitutes great character. The "Great Character" theme will continue throughout the sixteen weeks. Students will focus on one character trait word each month and study composers which will include discussions of personalities, music, and character traits.

Administer student surveys (Appendix A): The researchers will administer a teacher-generated, age- appropriate survey in individual homerooms.

Distribute parent survey (Appendix B): Parents will be asked to rate their children in the following areas; listening skills, encouraging others, accepting others' ideas, appropriate manners, self-control.

Peer interview (Appendix D): Researchers will use class time to explain and facilitate the interview process. Students in the fourth grade class will interview their first grade book buddies about what respect means to them.

WEEK 2

Music: First Graders will sing, "God Bless America" and Columbus Day songs. There will also be discussions about respect and responsibility. Fourth Graders will sing and discuss, "I'm Not Gonna Let That Ruin My Day."

Communication Lab: Site A uses this published program on a weekly basis to foster good communication skills. Communication Lab allows students to role play better ways of communicating. Students actively participate with a partner or in a small group focusing on skills such as listening, manners, and appropriate responses.

Classroom Meetings: Through the use of weekly classroom meetings, the fourth grade students will explore the behavioral problems that they have experienced or observed so far this school year.

Journal entry: Sixth graders will respond to the read aloud book, The Hundred Dresses, focusing on empathy.

Teacher Checklist: (Appendix C) - researchers will observe students for a specific amount of time each day and record behaviors.

WEEK 3

Music: First graders will sing patriotic songs for Veteran's Day Program including "Star-Spangled Banner", "We Love The USA", "You're a Grand Old Flag", "The Caissons-Army", "Marine's Hymn", "Anchor's Away", "Air Force

Song", "This is My Country", and "God Bless America". Fourth graders will sing "Star-Spangled Banner", "You're a Grand Old Flag", "God Bless America", and "America, the Beautiful". The focus will be on gaining respect for our country.

Read aloud: The first and fourth grade students will listen to the stories Miss Maggie and Harald and the Great Stag. They will then respond on a given journal page with their book buddy (Appendices E and F).

Journal entry: The sixth graders will respond to The Cat Ate My Gymsuit, focusing on respect.

Literature Study: The fourth graders will conduct a character study based on the novel The Cricket in Times Square. They will do reflective journal writing throughout the novel (Appendix G). This study will continue through week seven.

Classroom meeting: Students will discuss current conflicts.

WEEK 4

Music: The first graders continue singing and reflecting on the patriotic songs. The fourth graders will study "The Sorcerer's Apprentice".

Read aloud: The first graders will listen to Miss Rumphius and discuss the characters.

Journal entry: The sixth graders will respond to The Cat Ate My Gymsuit, focusing on responsibility.

Classroom meeting: The fourth graders will discuss current conflicts.

WEEK 5

Music: The first graders will continue discussing and learning Patriotic Songs. The fourth graders will review "I'm Not Going to Let That Ruin My Day".

Read aloud: The first graders will listen to and discuss The Story of Ferdinand.

Journal entry: The sixth graders will respond to On My Honor, focusing on trustworthiness.

WEEK 6

Music: The first and fourth graders will sing "I Know an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Pie" focusing on character.

Read aloud: The first graders will listen to and discuss Keep the Lights Burning, Abbie.

Journal entry: The sixth graders will respond to On My Honor, focusing on personal responsibility.

Classroom meeting: The fourth graders will discuss current conflicts and solutions.

WEEK 7

Music: First graders will sing "Thanks for Thanksgiving" with discussion about Pilgrims' and character. The fourth graders will sing "A Time for Peace", rewriting the words to reflect personal thoughts on how to create peace in our world.

Read aloud: The first graders will listen to and discuss Fritz and the Fairy.

Journal entry: The sixth graders will read Stepping on the Cracks, focusing on making decisions.

Classroom meetings: The fourth graders will discuss current conflicts and solutions.

First and fourth book buddies: The buddies will read one of the Little Mermaid series of books about character and reflect on a given journal page (Appendix H).

WEEK 8

Music: The first graders will sing , "Christmas Makes Me Sing" with discussion of giving. They will write their own verses for the song. The fourth graders will sing "Dreidl", discussing how different cultures celebrate the holidays.

Read aloud: The first graders will listen to and discuss Brave Irene.

Journal entry: The sixth graders will read Stepping on the Cracks, focusing on treating others the way you want to be treated.

Literature study: The fourth graders will conduct a character study based on the novel War With Grandpa. This study will continue through week twelve.

Classroom meeting: The fourth graders will discuss current conflicts and solutions.

WEEK 9

Music: The first graders will learn the song "Chanukah" followed discussion of how various cultures celebrate holidays. The first and fourth graders will continue to practice holiday songs.

Read aloud: The first graders will listen to and discuss Through Grandpa's Eyes.

Journal entry: The sixth graders will respond to Stepping on the Cracks, focusing on making decisions.

Classroom meeting: The fourth graders will discuss current conflicts and solutions.

WEEK 10

Music: The first and fourth graders will continue to rehearse for holiday programs.

Journal entry: The sixth graders will read The Acorn People, focusing on understanding others and empathy.

Classroom meeting: The fourth graders will discuss current conflicts and solutions.

WEEK 11

Music: The first and fourth graders will perform in holiday programs, including the rewritten verses focusing on the character trait a giving heart.

Read aloud: The first graders will listen to and discuss Timothy Goes to School.

Classroom meeting: The fourth graders will discuss current conflicts and solutions.

WEEK 12

Music: The first and fourth graders learn the Allegiance Rap. The first graders will learn, "When the Saints Go Marching In" and the fourth graders will learn, "Free At Last," both focusing on African-American spirituals.

Read aloud: The first graders listen to and discuss The Hundred Penny Box.

Literature study: The fourth graders will respond to War With Grandpa on a given journal page (Appendix I).

Service Project: The sixth graders will plan and implement a service project providing gift baskets for children in the hospital. The service project will continue through week sixteen.

Classroom meetings: The fourth graders will discuss current conflicts and solutions.

WEEK 13

Music: The first graders will study Sergei Prokofiev and "Peter and the Wolf". The fourth graders will sing "Free at Last" and "The Road to Freedom" continuing the study of African-American spirituals and the study of form in music.

Read aloud: The first graders will listen to and discuss Alfie Gives a Hand.

Classroom meetings: The fourth graders will discuss current conflicts and solutions.

WEEK 14

Music: The first graders continues the study of Peter and the Wolf.

Read aloud: The first graders listen to and discuss the story Loop the Loop.

Classroom meeting: The fourth graders will discuss current conflicts and solutions.

First and fourth grade book buddies: The buddies will watch the Disney video, "Beauty and the Beast". They will begin a character study with their book buddies (Appendix J).

WEEK 15

Music: The first graders will continue the study of Peter and the Wolf focusing on listening. The fourth graders will learn two state songs focusing on pride in and respect.

Read aloud: The first graders listen to and discuss The Biggest Bear.

Classroom meetings: The fourth graders will discuss current conflicts and solutions.

First and fourth grade book buddies: The buddies will finish the character study (Appendix J) of "Beauty and the Beast" and reflect on a given journal page (Appendix K).

WEEK 16

Journal review: The sixth grade students will respond to the question, "How have I changed as a result of studying characters in the novels I have read?"

Teacher checklist: The researchers will observe the same behaviors recorded in week two and evaluate the results of pre and post checklist (Appendix C).

Post student survey: The students will be given the survey and the results compared from week one to week 16 (Appendix A).

Post parent survey: The parents will be asked to complete the survey and the results will be compared from week one through week 16 (Appendix B).

Methods of Assessment

In order to assess the effectiveness of the intervention, behavior checklists (see Appendix C) will be analyzed and compared for any noticeable differences. The student surveys will be administered in October and January (see Appendix A). Assessments will be made after the final survey. Sixth graders will keep student journals. Students' written work and activities will be evaluated. Character building themes in literature will be used to assess students' growth and development of respect and responsibility (Appendices E - K).

The behavior checklist used included observations of students who talked at inappropriate times, were disrespectful of other peoples property and did not keep hands, feet, and objects to themselves. In addition a category was added so teachers could make note of students who demonstrated positive classroom behavior. This category was labeled 'caught being good'. A copy of the survey can be found in Appendix A.

The student survey was comprised of ten questions in which students were asked to rank the questions always, most of the time, sometimes, and never. Examples of questions included: other kids are disrespectful of my belongings, kids in my class interrupt the teacher, and my classmates hurt my feelings. The data was then tallied by the teachers. A copy of the survey can be found in Appendix B.

Sixth grade journals will include personal reflections from novels read in class. Reflections will focus on a particular character's actions or attitudes. For example, after reading the novel The Hundred Dresses students will write a journal reflection from the prompts: How did Maggie change from the beginning of the story to the end? and How did this story impact you? These

prompts will allow students to make connections to the characters and reflect on their own lives.

Character building themes in literature and music include respect, responsibility, empathy, trustworthiness, and kindness. These themes will be discussed and reflected on during group discussions about the songs and characters in the novels (Appendices E - K). Assessment will occur through teacher observations during the discussions (appendix C).

CHAPTER 4

PROJECT RESULTS

Historical Description of the Intervention

The objective of this project was to help students understand and exhibit a deeper respect for themselves and others. The students should be able to understand and show greater responsibility for their behavior and academic achievement. The collaboration of literature, music, and the researchers' current curriculum was selected to effect the desired changes.

The first grade class began their intervention by completing a survey about how children treat each other and how they feel about their peers, themselves and others. A survey was sent home to the parents, and the teacher started by using a checklist to observe behaviors throughout a given time period. These three tools were also used at the end of the intervention to compare the growth of the children and to measure the outcome of the intervention.

The second week began with a communication curriculum that helped to develop good communicators among children. It taught the correct, polite way in which to communicate with peers and adults. The curriculum is broken down into 14 lessons which were practiced over 12 weeks. They began by listening to a book called, Hooway for Wodney Wat, by Helen Lester, a story about a rat named Rodney who had a hard time pronouncing his /r/ sound correctly.

Because of this, Rodney was very shy and didn't have many friends. One day, a new rat named Camilla came to their school. She was a big, mean bully who thought she was smarter than everyone else. After a few days of her being there, all the other rats were very unhappy and afraid of her. The day it was Rodney's turn to be the leader in the game Follow the Leader, he was terrified. He knew the new rat would make fun of him and he was almost in tears. When he said, "Wake the leaves," everyone knew what he meant except Camilla, who actually tried to *wake up* the leaves. When Rodney said, "Weed the sign," all the other rats knew that he meant *read the sign* but Camilla started to pull weeds from under the sign. Finally when Rodney said, "Go west," all the rats rested on the ground but Camilla, wanting to be the fastest, smartest rat, started to run to the west. She ran and ran and was never seen from again. From that day, Rodney was a hero and no one ever again made fun of the way he talked.

Not only did this story use humor to introduce the need for being a good communicator, it introduced the children to the topic of respect and responsibility. There was a discussion about how disrespectful Camilla was to all the other rats and how wanting to always be the best can lead to trouble. The group also discussed what made Rodney a good hero and how the other rats were missing out on a good friend only because of the way he talked. They talked about words like empathy, feelings, respect, responsibility, caring and honesty.

The third week of the intervention started with the first communication lesson, using good eye contact. The children role-played what good and bad eye contact was and then used that vocabulary throughout the intervention. In the third week the first graders also began to practice for their service project. The children learned many patriotic songs and facts about the military and the importance of veterans in the country. In November, the children performed their songs and a skit about veterans to parents and veterans that were invited throughout the

community. They learned about the importance of Veteran's Day and why we celebrate it. Veterans and parents were invited to join the students for refreshments and visiting. The students use of eye contact played an important role in letting the veteran know they were listening and interested in what the veteran was saying.

Week four of the action plan started with communication lesson number two, using good body language. The children again role-played good and bad body language and added it to the communication vocabulary. The story, Miss Rumphius, a story about respect by Barbara Cooney, was read aloud and discussed in small groups. In the small groups the children had to decide where respect was shown, by whom and why. They made posters reflecting their discussions.

During week five the communication lesson was listening and observing. The students learned how to observe a situation before communicating to decide if it was a good time to interrupt. They were also taught how to be a good listener by using head nods, good eye contact and body language. During this week the children read The Story of Ferdinand, by Munro Leaf. It was a story about a bull who chose to be different and not fight with the others. He would rather smell the flowers and lay in the grass. When Ferdinand was picked to fight in the bullfights in Madrid, he just sat in the ring and smelled the flowers in all the ladies' hair. He would not fight at all and was soon sent back to his home to sit in the grass, where he was happy. The children discussed how being different is not always a bad thing and why they should respect each other's differences.

For week six the communication lesson was turn taking. The children learned how to take turns when communicating and why everyone can not talk at the same time. The story they read was Keep the Lights Burning, Abbie, by Peter Roop. This story showed the children how to be

responsible and the importance of doing their best and believing in themselves. The story was a touching tale about a father who left his daughter in charge of lighting the lights in the lighthouse while he was away at sea getting supplies. Her older brother is out fishing for food and the mother is too sick so Abbie must be responsible. At first she does not think she can. After some rough weather and scary nights with her father away she was still able to do her job because she knew many people on ships were counting on her to guide them to safety. When her father returned he told her that being away was also scary for him, but each night when he saw the lights he knew his family was safe. The children discussed important jobs and how they could show responsibility at home.

The communication lessons were combined in weeks seven and eight. The children worked on praise and criticism. They learned how to praise someone for their work or effort and how to use positive criticism when evaluating each other's work. The children read and discussed in small groups two more stories dealing with responsibility. The stories were, Brave Irene by William Stag and Fritz and the Mess Fairy by Rosemary Wells.

Teaching about compassion was the focus for the intervention over the next several weeks. The children were put into four groups with each group reading a different book. They read the books at home with their families and shared with each other how the books made their families feel and what was discussed. After sharing in their group, they made murals about the compassion the characters displayed. The groups would then switch books and follow the same book lesson. The compassion component of the intervention lasted through week 12. During the last four weeks there were four communication lessons. They were: how to communicate successes and failures to one's self and others; staying on the subject during a conversation; what a normal volume would be (not too soft or too loud); the importance of speaking clearly: and

what is a normal rate of speech (not too fast or too slow).

The last two weeks of the intervention were spent reviewing the communication lessons and reading two more stories about respect, Loop the Loop by Barbara Dugan and The Hundred Penny Box by Sharon Mathia. Each book was read and discussed by the whole group. The students recalled all of the respectful things they had read in books and how to use them in their lives.

When the intervention was over the same student and parent surveys used in the beginning were given again and the results were measured. The teacher checklist was used again and compared to the previous checklists used throughout the intervention.

Classroom B, Site A conducted weekly class meetings involving the students and the teacher. Any concerns the students had that occurred in or out of the classroom were brought before the group for discussion. Students sat on the floor in a circle, and the teacher acted as the moderator. The ground rules included coming to the group ready to listen and to be respectful of one another's feelings and opinions. No names were to be mentioned.

Discussions typically revolved around behavior at lunchtime, before and after school, and at morning recess. Examples would include being excluded from a game, not sharing playground equipment, going into someone's locker or desk without permission, and using inappropriate language. In addition, there were discussions about students' behavior in the hallways while moving from class to class, as well as behavior towards substitute teachers, special subject teachers, and lunch room supervisors.

There have been incidents of bullying and harassment during the lunch hour as well as before and after school. These situations were discussed during the meetings and if serious enough, brought before the principal for attention. The principal would then ask to speak with

these students individually and determine if the parents should be notified. During the course of the class meeting, the teacher asked the students if they had any suggestions for resolving a problem. Often they would, and these solutions were explored and discussed the following week to see if there had been any change in the behavior. The class meetings were considered very profitable by the class. They expressed interest in having them continue and were very respectful of people's feelings during sometimes sensitive discussions.

The Book buddy program was used to bring older and younger children together to read. It included the students at Site A, Classrooms A and B. Fourth grade students were paired with first grade students for a twenty minute period once a week. The students were divided between Classrooms B and C to allow for more space. The older children chose a book during their library time to read to the younger, emerging readers. They were asked to model appropriate behavior to the younger students while they read, and while they walked together in the hallway. Other activities included reading a story together from a series on good character published by Little Golden Books. They were then asked to write observations and insights about positive qualities they read and put them onto a journal page. See Appendix _____. In addition, book buddies watched the video, Beauty and the Beast. Together they decided on a character from the movie that they wanted to observe from beginning to end. They then compared the qualities of that character at the end of the movie to their behavior at the beginning. They recorded their findings on a journal page. A large group discussion enabled students to listen to one another's observations.

Communication lab is a published program with lessons to teach students social skills and speech techniques for better communication. It was used in Classrooms A and B to teach behaviors students could incorporate into their group work with peers, as well as problem-

solving skills they need to deal with everyday challenges in school and in life. Examples of these lessons included observation, eye contact, body language, listening, turn taking, praise, criticism, and success/failure. The lessons were facilitated by means of discussion and role play, and took place over a two and a half month period for about 15 to 20 minutes a week.

Fourth graders in Class B read The Cricket in Times Square by George Selden. The story focused on the relationships of a cat, mouse, cricket, a little boy, and the survival of a newsstand in a busy Times Square subway station. The creatures in the story all exhibit human qualities, but never show that side of themselves to the boy. The story took the reader to the hiding places of the animals and showed real teamwork as they worked together to scrounge for food. There are situations that arise within the book that cause each of the characters to initially place blame on one another, but ultimately their friendship wins out as they think of ways to solve their problems in a responsible way. The most touching part of the story came at the end where the animal friends must say goodbye to the cricket. Through discussion and journaling, students responded to situations where they needed to put the feelings of others before their own. (Appendix G). This story revealed many fine qualities of friendship, loyalty, cooperation, and love. It demonstrated putting oneself aside for the good of another, the value of character, and building principled relationships.

The War With Grandpa by George Selden takes place in a modern day American home, with a very average family, parents and two children. Grandpa's wife had just passed away and so he comes to live with the family. To make accommodations for him, he moves into his grandson Peter's room. This causes Peter to become enraged and conflicted because he loves his grandpa, but does not like having to move to the attic so his grandpa can live in his old room. What results is much anger and tension between the two characters. Problems between the two

escalate and at one point, Grandpa becomes so frustrated and angry that he hits Peter. The story allowed for discussions on how people relate to members of their families and what they do to resolve conflicts when they arise. It also provided a way to discuss how the students would feel if they had to give up something they really cared about for another family member. The steps toward the reconciliation process of the characters was discussed as a means to understanding the responsibility of caring for one another. There was opportunity for students to reflect on Peter's behavior and his relationship with his grandfather as it evolved throughout the story (Appendix I).

At Site A, a targeted first grade and fourth grade class attended music in room C. Students used songs, composer studies, listening activities and a bulletin board with activities relating to character traits in order to study positive behaviors and to help students to internalize an understanding of responsibility and respect for themselves and others. In order to reinforce these attributes, these students also participated in a cooperative activity known as Book Buddies. Once each week, first and fourth graders were paired up to read books, and, on a few occasions, participate in a character study and reflection.

To introduce the concept of character building, students sang, "From the Inside Out," and discussed the fact that they each possess the ability to solve problems from the inside of themselves. Each class also learned the school theme song which reminded students to show respect for others and be responsible to live in harmony. Finally, the bulletin board activity entitled, "Great Character," was introduced. Each month a new character trait was discussed. At the end of each music class, a student who demonstrated that quality, was given the "Great Character Award," and received the honor of sitting in the "Great Character Chair" during the next music class. By the end of the 16 weeks, all children had demonstrated one of the desired

traits and were given the privilege of sitting in the special chair. The desired character traits discussed during this time were: kindness, self-control, patience, a giving heart, peacemaker and honesty.

The first graders were involved in presenting a Veteran's Day program. Music classes were devoted to learning nine patriotic songs for this program. To better understand the words to these songs, there were many discussions and historical stories shared during this time. The story of Frances Scott Key was a tool used to teach the history of the "Star-Spangled Banner". During this discussion, the characters of the soldiers in the war and Frances Scott Key were evaluated to determine who had "great" character. The theme of patriotism was also used to further the discussion of positive character.

First and fourth graders learned many songs related to the history and the development of their country. There were many deliberations about the character of various people associated with the songs. Columbus Day songs, "I'm Not Gonna Let that Ruin My Day," and "I Know an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Pie," all lent themselves to discussions of various personalities and character traits.

Listening activities were also used as vehicles to talk about other positive personality traits. "The Sorcerer's Apprentice" is program music that tells an old story of a boy apprentice who attempts magic tricks which are beyond his ability. Fourth grade students evaluated the wisdom of this boy and the character traits he portrayed. They shared thoughts on what they would have done in the same situation. First graders studied listening lessons from "Peter and the Wolf," written by the composer, Prokofiev. These students had the opportunity to evaluate the strong and weak characters in the story. At the beginning of every class, students listened to excerpts of various works by many composers: Bach, Gershwin, Copland, Saint Saens, Linda

Williams, Tchaikovsky, Prokofiev, Bernstein, Beethoven, Haydn, and Handel. This activity led to discussions of composers' lives, behaviors and quality of character.

As the Christmas holidays approached, music classes were focused on learning songs for the holiday programs. The first graders learned, "Christmas Makes Me Sing," creating verses that corresponded to their thoughts about character and how those thoughts related to the holiday program theme - a giving heart. The targeted first grade class wrote the words, "Christmas makes me love, love my neighbor." The targeted fourth grade class sang, "A Time for Peace." They also sang words relaying the message that love would help to create peace in the world. As they prepared to dance and sing, "Dreidl", for the Holiday Sing, the fourth graders also discussed differences in how people celebrate the holidays. They discussed the importance of tolerance of others' religious beliefs and celebrations.

Book buddy activities involving the targeted first and fourth grade classes took place in rooms A and C, once a week for 20 minutes. Some of these times were spent quietly reading together. On several occasions, each researcher read a book to part of the group, led a discussion about the characters in each book and followed up with a journal writing activity (Appendices E and F). During this time, the book buddies also read and discussed books together from a "Little Mermaid" series. These books taught a lesson which the buddies reflected on and together wrote their reflections on a journal page (Appendix H). The researcher in room C took the opportunity to read Keeping a Christmas Secret, by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor, a book about people who exhibited great character during the Christmas season. The researcher shared this book with the book buddies in the targeted elementary classes and the discussions that followed were about which characters demonstrated kindness and a giving heart.

During week 12, all first and fourth graders learned the "Allegiance Rap," a rhythmic

version of the Pledge of Allegiance. Posture, attention, and behavior were all part of the discussion associated with the respect given to the flag. During the next few weeks, both first and fourth grade classes spent part of each music class singing and discussing African-American spirituals. First graders sang, "When the Saints Go Marching In." Fourth graders experienced the traditional, "Free At Last", and the more contemporary song, "The Road to Freedom." Conversations about slavery, injustice and freedom were integral parts of this study of spirituals. All classes concluded the study of spirituals by viewing a 30 minute story on video about a blind slave boy who struggled with his desire to play and compose music. The children watched the story as the slave boy was treated unfairly and was used for the purpose of monetary gain for his master. Students were then given the opportunity to dialogue about their feelings on slavery. They also shared thoughts about the positive and negative behaviors and character traits they observed in the story of "Blind Tom."

During week 15, fourth graders learned two state songs that focused on pride in their state and respect for where they lived. The students shared feelings about the state and how the songs reflected their own feelings and thoughts.

Over the span of two weeks, the first and fourth grade book buddies participated in a character study from the video "Beauty and the Beast." Both classes met in room C for an extended book buddy time. During the first session, students talked about the characters in the story. They discussed the positive and negative characteristics of the four main personalities in the story. Each pair of buddies discussed and chose their preference of which character to closely observe during the video. The group of two classes then watched the first half of "Beauty and the Beast." Afterwards, discussion within the entire group was geared towards the problems or conflicts each character experienced. On a journal page each pair of buddies wrote

personality descriptions of their chosen character, evaluating their character at the beginning of the story (Appendix J). Session II began with a review of the character studies discussed the week before. Students also shared the problems each character was experiencing as the first half of the story ended. The second half of the story was played. The children shared their observations about the changes in the characters and how each conflict was resolved. They also were given the opportunity to share how this related to their own lives. The discussion concluded with talk about character traits, how to solve problems, and how problems can be good forces in a person's life, by helping a person to develop great character traits. The first and fourth grade buddies proceeded to finish the activity page by writing about their chosen character and how he or she changed. The students were also asked to write a reflection on how this affected each of them and what they learned from studying the characters in this story.

The final week, post-student and parent surveys were distributed and completed in classrooms A and B. The researchers in rooms A, B and C observed and recorded specific behaviors on checklists, as in the beginning of this project.

Site B used current sixth grade novels and personal journals to study positive character traits and to instill an understanding of respect for self and for others. A variety of activities before, during, and after reading the novels were also implemented. Sixth graders also participated in a service project to reach out to the immediate community.

As an introductory activity for the action research, students played Human Bingo (Appendix K). This game allowed students to get to know each other better, to develop better communication skills, and to provide familiar character trait vocabulary that would be used throughout the 16 weeks. The activity began by brainstorming words that characterized people at their best, such as friendly, compassionate, honest, and helpful. Students then created a bingo

sheet containing all the words they brainstormed. Students were given 15 minutes to walk around the room and to find classmates who fit the character trait and tell why that trait could describe them. A bulletin board entitled, "Being Your Best", was then created from these words. Each student received a 6" x 2" card to write a specific word and decorate it. These cards were used as a border for the bulletin board. The bulletin board, which was at the front of the room where all could see, also displayed pictures of the novels they would be reading. This served as a reminder to students of the novels read, the characters studied, and the character traits that were discussed.

Personal journals called Being My Best were used to help students develop an awareness of their own behaviors and characteristic traits. Students' journals included personal inventories of themselves. A relationship inventory, character trait inventory, and self-portrait helped students reflect on themselves before reflecting on the characters in the novels they would soon be encountering (Appendices L - N) . Later, when students wrote about characters from the novels, they were able to make connections between themselves and the characters.

The first book was read aloud to students. The Hundred Dresses was chosen to help students understand empathy. This is a classic story of a little girl who is teased by her classmates because her last name is ethnic and sounds different from those of her classmates. Her family eventually moves away because the situation becomes unbearable. After listening to this story, students wrote their first reflection in their journals. Students were asked to reflect on the characters in the novel and to make connections to their own lives. This was an open-ended reflection and many students had difficulty with this type of reflection. The researcher realized that the next journal entry would need to be a more specific question.

The next novel students read was, The Cat Ate My Gymsuit. Respect and responsibility

were the key characteristics on which students were to focus. This was a story about a young girl who lacks self-confidence but gains it by taking a stand for something she believes. Before starting to read the novel, students began with an activity in which they made a T-Chart that focused on their own personal qualities. On one side of the chart students listed qualities about themselves that could be changed and on the other side of the chart students listed qualities that could not be changed. This activity worked well because students were made aware of their own strengths and weaknesses. Students took the activity seriously and most came up with qualities about themselves that needed improvement. Qualities that most students listed as needing improvement included being nicer to others, not gossiping or spreading rumors, and not judging others. As students read the novel these issues were discussed. Students were also required to answer comprehension questions that reflected on situations the character encountered and how they would have handled those same situations. At the end of the novel students wrote a reflection in their personal journals in response to the question, "If Marcy was your classmate, how would you help her with her problems?" This type of question was more specific than the first journal entry and students had an easier time answering it.

The next novel students read was, On My Honor, which focused on trustworthiness, honor, and personal responsibility. This was a gripping story about a boy who is on his honor about where he will spend the day. After disobeying his father, his best friend drowns and he must face the consequences of his actions. Before reading this novel, students went through an activity called "Liar's Club". Students sat in a circle and told two lies and one truth about themselves. Other students in the class had to guess which statement was the truth. After this activity they had a discussion about the importance of telling the truth and what honor means. The issue of whether it is appropriate to lie also came up and these discussions were explored in

more depth throughout the reading of the novel. Students also role played scenes in the novel in which the main character had to make critical choices. Students took their role playing seriously and provided the class with good examples of how the main character could have made better choices throughout the story. At the end of the novel students again wrote reflections in their journals. The questions posed to students were, "How could the main character avoided getting himself into a situation which he knew was wrong? Have you ever been 'on your honor' and gone back on your word? Is it ever okay to lie?"

Stepping on the Cracks was the third novel, which focused on friendship, treating others the way you want to be treated, and making decisions. This was a story of two friends who endure the bullying of a classmate and later discover the abusive home from which he comes. The setting takes place during World War II where the bully's brother is a deserter of the war. The two friends must decide if they should report the brother or protect him. Before reading this novel students completed a Predict-O-Gram (Appendix O) in which they predicted what the story would be about based on a list of words given to them from the researcher (Appendix P). The list included words such as bully, compassion, understanding, lies, trouble, honesty, crazy man, and war, as well as other words that set the time and place for the story. Students shared their stories with the class and these stories opened up discussion to the important character traits that were to be studied throughout the novel. Throughout the novel students discussed comprehension questions that focused on how to deal with a bully, when to show compassion, and the effect choices have on one's own life and the life of others. Lively discussions were held and students were forced to expand their thinking and frames of reference as differing viewpoints were shared. Students also role played various scenes from the novel in which the characters faced life-changing situations. The journal response questions were, "What character can you

relate to the best and why? Are you like this character or not like this character?"

The action plan called for students to read The Acorn People. Time constraints necessitated the elimination of this novel. Students began a service project during the winter holiday season that continued through the sixteenth week. The service project was designed for students to reach out to their immediate community to understand and develop the traits of kindness, empathy, and compassion for others. This service project helped the community children's hospital. Students created gift baskets for sick children ages six months to 18 years old. The gift baskets included student-made puzzles, riddles, jokes, coloring books, stories, and cards. Students also purchased crayons and markers to fill the baskets. These baskets were delivered to the hospital during the Christmas season.

Presentation and Analysis of Results

In order to assess the effects of character education through the use of the current curriculum, a weekly tally of behavioral incidents was recorded before and after the intervention.

Table 5 - Classroom A

Categories and Number of Behavior Incidents September 10 through September 28 and February 11 through February 14

	PRE INTERVENTION		POST INTERVENTION	
BEHAVIOR CATEGORY	**Number of incidents**	**Number of students**	**Number of incidents**	**Number of students**
Talks at inappropriate times	50	16	5	3
Disrespectful of others' property	17	10	0	0
Does not keep hands, feet, and objects to self	28	10	0	0
Caught being good	35	19	40	22

Classroom A showed a dramatic decrease in incidents of negative behaviors. Before the intervention, the first grade class reported 73% negative behaviors and 24% positive behaviors. After the intervention, the same class demonstrated 11% negative behaviors and 89% positive behaviors showing a decrease of 62% in negative behaviors and an increase in positive behaviors of 65%. It is noted that the category of talking at inappropriate times decreased dramatically. The researchers noted that in the categories pertaining to respect of persons and property, the negitive bahaviors decreased to 0 incidents following the intervention. This data is reflected in Table 5.

Table 6 - Classroom B

Categories and Number of Behavior Incidents September 10 through September 28 and February 11 through February 14

	PRE INTERVENTION		POST INTERVENTION	
BEHAVIOR CATEGORY	**Number of incidents**	**Number of students**	**Number of incidents**	**Number of students**
Talks at inappropriate times	30	11	3	3
Disrespectful of others' property	5	4	0	0
Does not keep hands, feet, and objects to self	2	1	0	0
Caught being good	8	7	21	10

Classroom B showed a decrease in incidents of negative behaviors. Before the intervention, the fourth grade class reported 82% negative behaviors and 18% positive behaviors. After the intervention, this class demonstrated 13% negative behaviors and 88% positive

behaviors. This shows a 69% decrease in negative behaviors and an increase in positive behaviors of 70%. The category of talking at inappropriate times decreased considerably and the categories pertaining to respect of persons and property decreased to 0. It is also noted that the incidents of positive behavior increased measurably.

Table 7 - Classroom D

Categories and Number of Behavior Incidents September 10 through September 28 and February 11 through February 14

	PRE INTERVENTION		POST INTERVENTION	
BEHAVIOR CATEGORY	**Number of incidents**	**Number of students**	**Number of incidents**	**Number of students**
Talks at inappropriate times	22	8	12	4
Disrespectful of others' property	12	5	6	2
Does not keep hands, feet, and objects to self	8	4	2	1
Caught being good	10	5	42	21

Classroom D showed a decrease in incidents of negative behaviors. Before the intervention, the sixth grade class reported 81% negative behaviors and 19% positive behaviors. After the intervention, this class demonstrated 32% negative behaviors and 68% positive behaviors. This showed a 49% decrease in negative behaviors and an increase in positive behaviors of 49%. Although there is a decrease in negative behaviors, the most notable change is in the area of positive behaviors with an increase from 10 incidents of caught being good, to 42.

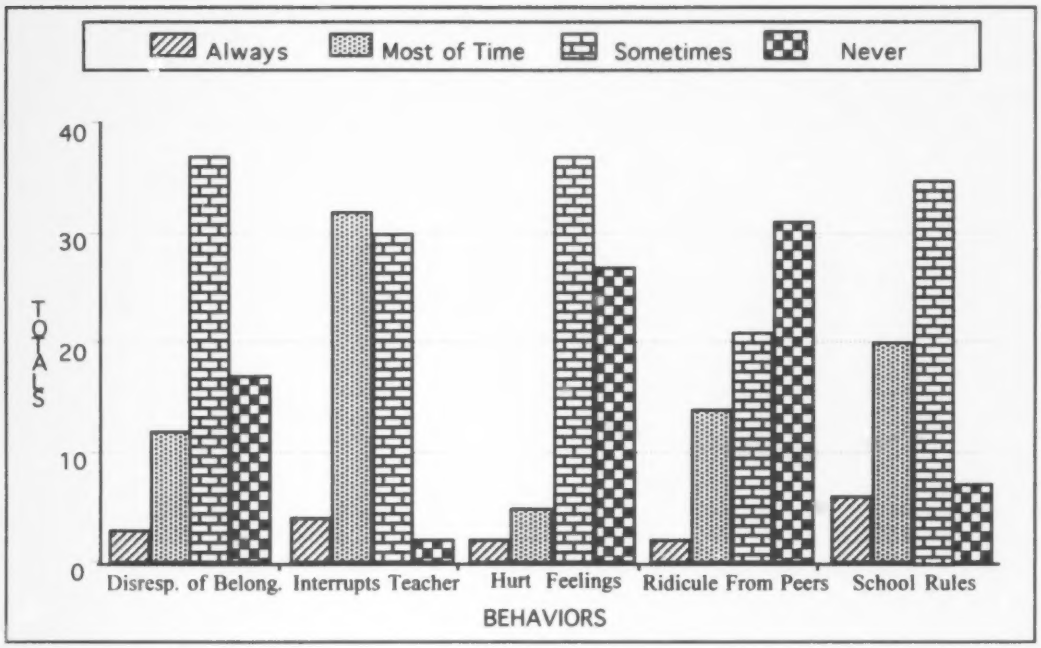


Figure 3. Pre-intervention survey results include classrooms A, B, and D.

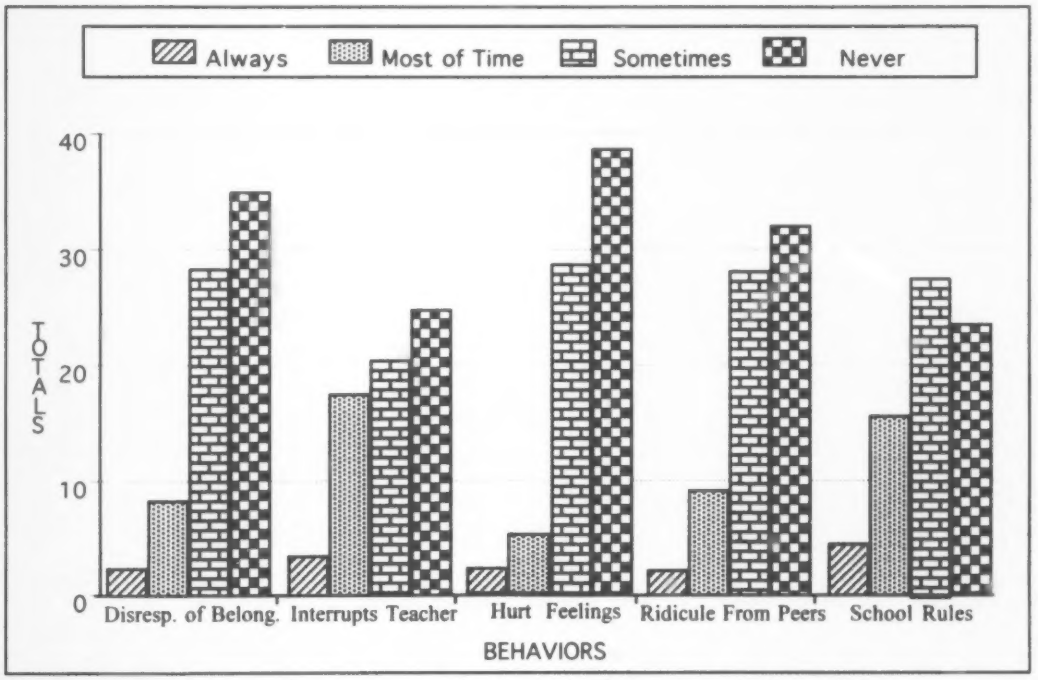


Figure 4. Post-intervention survey results include classrooms A, B, and D.

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In order to assess the effects of character education through use of the curriculum, student surveys were utilized. Students were asked to rate the following behaviors observed in other students: disrespecting others' belongings, interrupting teacher hurting others' feelings, fearing ridicule from peers, and breaking school rules. The rating scale was always, sometimes, most of the time, and never. This tool was used to assess students' perceptions of the behavior of their classmates. The pre survey was given on September 19, 2001, and the post survey was given on March 13, 2002 in sites A, B, and D.

Upon analysis of the pre survey results, researchers noted the area of particular concentration was student interruption of the teacher. Post survey results showed the most significant change occurred in this area. Prior to the intervention only 3% of the students indicated they never interrupted the teacher. Post survey results showed 37% of students never interrupted the teacher. Thirty percent of students showed growth in this area. This is a significant improvement of student-self control in the classroom.

The area of lesser focus based on survey results prior to the intervention was ridicule from peers. Results of the pre survey showed this area to be the one in which the least significant change occurred. Both the pre and post surveys indicated only two students always felt ridiculed by peers. This is 3% of all students surveyed. Students that never felt ridiculed by peers remained consistent in both surveys. In the pre survey 45% of students never felt ridiculed by peers and in the post survey 46% of students never felt ridiculed from peers. The small percentage of students indicating a concern in this area showed this was not an area of major emphasis throughout the intervention. These results show that most students have an inner awareness of respect for others.

Figure 5. The Pre-Intervention Parent Survey includes results from Classrooms A, B, and D.

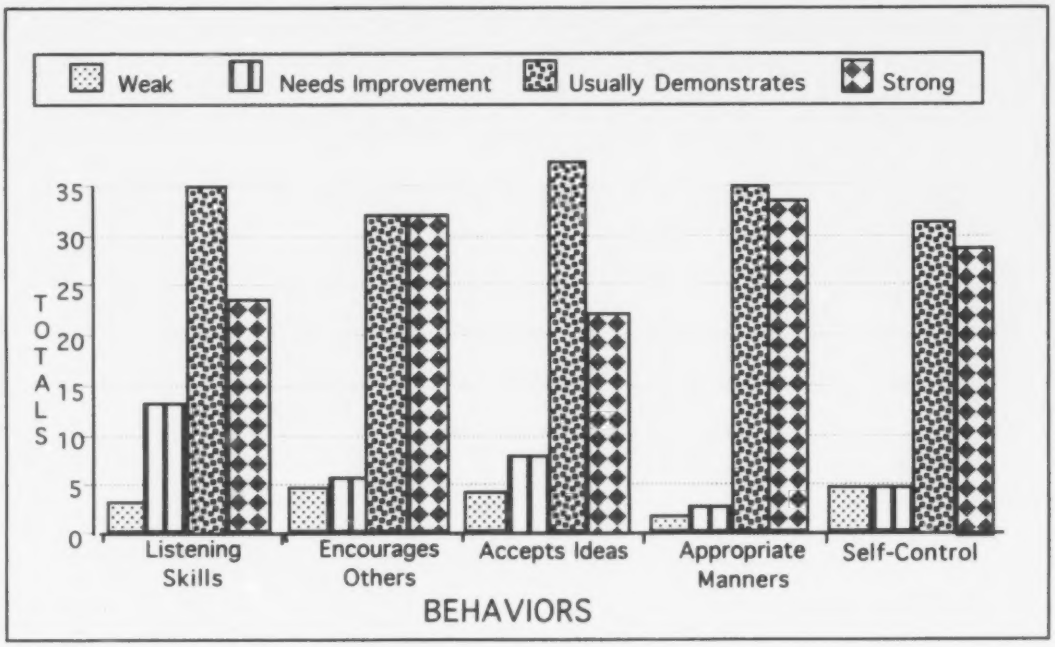
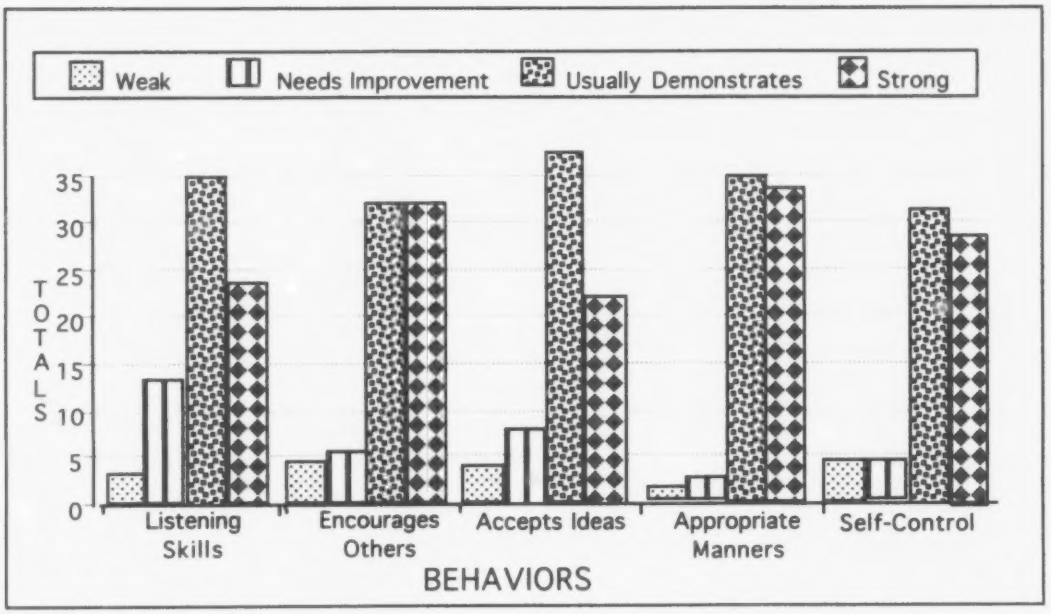


Figure 6. The Post-Intervention Parent Survey includes results from Classrooms A, B, and D



As shown in Figure 6 the intervention showed growth in all of the targeted areas. Substantial growth was noted in the usually demonstrates and strong categories. There was an overall positive change observed by the parents in all categories. In the listening skills category the researchers found the greatest improvement among parents who felt their children exhibited strong behaviors with a growth of 50%. The category of encourages others showed little growth in any behavior. The third category, accepts others ideas, showed the most measurable growth in the area of weak behavior with a positive change of 20%. In the manners category, improvement in the usually demonstrates area grew by 11%. The final area was self-control. Improvement was noted in the needs improvement area of 8% and in the strong area of 9%.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the presentation and analysis of the data on the use of current curriculum in the classroom to promote respectful behavior, the students showed significant improvement. Methods of intervention included read alouds, class meetings, Communication Lab, novels that demonstrated positive character attributes, journal reflections, book buddies, music, and service projects. As a result of these interventions, the researchers have observed in students a genuine caring for one another, and an insightfulness into their intro- and interpersonal relationships.

The intervention involving read alouds for younger students focused on picture books that demonstrated a specific character quality. Activities to reinforce student development of these qualities included role playing, discussions, and journaling. The students responded well and showed understanding when participating in discussion and journaling. However, during role play children had a difficult time with self-control.

Class meetings were used as a means for students to air their feelings about situations that occurred in and on school grounds. These open discussions with students about problems

associated with behavior during the school day proved to be successful. Students, along with the teacher, looked for ways to solve problems together. They would then follow up the next week to see if there had been a change in the situation. The students looked forward to the class meeting, and it was determined by the students and teacher that this would be a worthwhile activity to continue throughout the rest of the year.

The weakest part of the intervention was Communication Lab, designed to teach social skills and better communication. An annual review is conducted by staff and students to reinforce components of the program such as, observation, praise, criticism, listening, eye contact, and body language. Role play and discussion were the primary teaching methods used. A lack of self control by students during the role plays made successful implementation difficult. This program did not seem to have as much carry over or impact on the students as the other interventions. The lessons are presented to the class in isolation rather than as an integrated part of the curriculum. Therefore, it was difficult to measure noticeable growth in the area of positive character qualities.

The novels used for study for this intervention were helpful in sparking discussions about the qualities of friendship, loyalty, and family relationships. Other qualities covered in the novels included personal responsibility, respect for others, and honorable actions. All of the novels studied were in place in the district's curriculum, and proved to be a successful method to promote self-awareness of positive character traits in students. The students made connections with the characters in the stories by reflecting on experiences they had in common. For example, some students realized the importance of saying, "I'm sorry" when they hurt someone's feelings. Others recognized loyalty and respect for others as the basis for good relationships with their peers.

Another positive intervention involved reflective journaling. Through written responses students were able to express personal connections with characters and situations in the stories. Younger students expressed their connections through illustrations. For example, when asked to express the quality of loyalty, students showed their understanding by drawing friends standing together during a difficult situation. Researchers observed students bringing their understanding of mutual respect to the next level by showing concern for peers outside of the classroom.

The weekly book buddy activity provided opportunities for older students to read to younger students. Besides reading books together, students participated in discussions and engaged in activities dealing with building character. Students reflected about what happened to the characters, how they approached their problems, and how they could have acted differently by showing strong character. Students responded positively to the intervention, and looked forward to reading together each week. The bonds that were established during this time have continued and researchers witnessed positive interactions between the students. A culminating activity for book buddies was an evaluation of characters from the video, "Beauty and the Beast" (Appendix J). On journal pages, the children recorded their thoughts about the characters they chose to follow throughout the story. Students then responded by writing a reflection on what they had learned about themselves, how they approached problems, how they solved them, and if they were developing weaker or greater character through their conflicts. They used vocabulary that had been stressed throughout the intervention which demonstrated a positive response to the interventions.

During the regularly scheduled music class times, students participated in the Great Character Chair program. At the end of every class, the students were anxious to discover who was chosen to sit in this special chair. This intervention was successful because students worked

hard to exhibit the character traits that were chosen for each month. One parent left a phone message stating that this character chair program was working well. She had noticed improvements in her son's behavior and attitude at home. On many occasions during music class, the researcher and students discussed the meaning of songs and the character traits that were exhibited by people in the songs. Students used the vocabulary of the Great Character program during these discussions, thereby showing a positive response to the character traits focused on in class. Songs such as "From the Inside Out" lead to discussions about how to deal with problems. The school song, sung many times during the intervention, lead to honest discussions demonstrating that students learned to show respect for others and act responsibly.

During Christmastime, younger students displayed understanding of the character building qualities covered in music class as they created their own verses in a song about how they felt during the holidays. During the learning of the song, "A Time for Peace," older students responded to questions about a need for peace in our world. Students concluded that they should exhibit kindness, patience, self-control, peacemaking, and a giving heart, all qualities that were part of the intervention activities.

Service projects were also part of the intervention. Activities such as raising funds for needy families by performing community services, collecting food for the local food pantry, and creating and donating gift baskets for the local hospital, gave students tangible ways to help those less fortunate than themselves. These projects provided teachable moments and reinforced the goals of the intervention. Students responded favorably and communicated to the researchers their desire to participate in additional projects of this nature in the future.

The researchers conclude that these interventions were worthy of implementation on a yearly basis. It is recommended that others interested in building positive character traits in

students follow procedures outlined in this project. Teaching character education through the use of current curriculum is a valid method and is easily implemented.

The use of novels, read alouds, and music already in place in the curriculum were helpful for teachers in planning lessons that intersect the curriculum and character building. The researchers encourage teachers to examine the current curricular materials available within their own districts before pursuing outside resources. These types of materials can be easily shared with colleagues and allow for collaboration on lesson plans and activities. A team effort can strengthen this program.

Journaling enabled the researchers to read responses from all students concerning specific questions related to good character. Whereas discussion may involve limited numbers of students, the written reflection allowed all students to articulate their feelings and make connections to the works being studied. This intervention was successful and determined to be another valid assessment to be implemented into the curriculum.

The researchers highly recommend the Great Character Chair activity for creating an environment where children are eager to pursue the development of positive character traits. It is also recommended that a music classroom setting include discussions and activities relating to songs that draw attention to character building. This concept could be incorporated into the regular classroom as well. The chair would stand as a visual reminder to students as they read and discuss picture books and novels that reflect strong character.

The partnering of older and younger students for the book buddy program was successful on several levels. First, older children had the responsibility of modeling good behavior to the younger children. They were asked to walk quietly to their reading classroom or area, and to behave appropriately while sharing with one another. Second, they modeled respect for one

another by listening to the stories being read. Finally, the relationships that were established during this program have continued and show the care and concern that nurturing relationships require. Therefore the goal of fostering interpersonal relationships was reinforced.

Researchers found class meetings a helpful way to address difficult situations students encountered throughout the school day. To make sure that only one person speaks at a time the researchers recommend that the student wishing to speak hold an object, such as a "talking stick". The class recognizes this speaker as the only person talking. When the speaker is finished this object can then be passed to the next speaker. This method allows for students to be respectful listeners. It is also important to note that the teacher does not assume the role of judge, but of facilitator. The teacher works with students to solve problems. Students look for solutions rather than ways to place blame on one another.

Communication Lab does not receive the endorsement of the researchers for this intervention. This program creates contrived situations for students and provides little carryover in their daily experiences. Students do not take the lessons seriously and it has been observed that there is an obvious lack of self-control during these lessons.

Students were able to transfer the learning of positive character traits to the community by performing service projects. The researchers would encourage teachers to incorporate this activity as part of the character building curriculum. Students should have options as to what kinds of service projects they want to participate in so that they have a vested interest in the service they are performing. Local organizations are willing to work cooperatively with teachers to set up worthwhile projects.

The researchers would strongly promote teaching character education through the use of the current curriculum. Teachers have the resources needed to implement this type of program in

their classrooms. These activities could become a regular part of lesson plans throughout the school year. Positive responses from the students reinforce the desire of the researchers to continue in the study of building character through curricular materials.

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Appendices

Student Survey

Please help us with this survey by answering these questions honestly.
Circle one of the following for each question.

A = Always
S = Sometimes
M = Most of the time
N = Never

A M S N	1. Other kids are disrespectful of my belongings.
A M S N	2. Kids in my class interrupt the teacher.
A M S N	3. Other kids leave me out when they play games.
A M S N	4. I see others get mad when they don't get their way.
A M S N	5. My classmates interrupt me when I am talking.
A M S N	6. My classmates get mad at me when I win.
A M S N	7. My classmates hurt my feelings.
A M S N	8. I don't raise my hand because others might laugh at me.
A M S N	9. I see kids breaking school rules.
A M S N	10. I see other kids giving positive comments to each other.

July 10, 2001

Dear Parents,

This trimester, as part of a Masters Program, I will be focusing on improving respect and responsibility of the students in my classroom. Your observations and opinions are valuable to my research as well. Your responses will be kept confidential. Please do not include your name on this survey.

Rate your child in the following areas, with 1 being weak and 4 being strong.

Listening Skills	1	2	3	4
Encouraging Others	1	2	3	4
Accepting Others' Ideas	1	2	3	4
Appropriate Manners	1	2	3	4
Self-Control	1	2	3	4

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Researcher's name

Teacher Checklist

Date_____ Time_____	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Talks at inappropriate times					
Disrespectful of others' property					
Does not keep hands, feet, and objects to self					
Caught being good					

Appendix D

Student Peer Interview - Fourth/Sixth Graders

Name _____ Name _____

1. What does respect mean to you?

2. To whom do you show the most respect?

3. How do you show respect at home?

4. How do you show respect at school?

5. Are there some people who do not need to be shown respect?

6. Tell about a time when you did and did not show respect.

7. What is teasing? Is it ever okay? When is teasing not okay?

8. Who is responsible for your behavior?

9. What behaviors from other students bother you? (List behaviors only, not names, please)

10. If you could improve anything about your behavior, what would it be?

11. What can you do to make the classroom a better place for everyone?

12. When someone's feelings are hurt, what do you do?

4th grader _____ 1st grade _____

Kids Building Character

Buddy Journal I - Compassion

How did Nat show compassion to Miss Maggie?

First Grader response:

Fourth Grader response:

4th grader 1st grader

Kids Building Character

Buddy Journal I - Compassion

How did Harold show compassion to the Great Stag?

First Grader response:

Fourth Grader response:

The Cricket in Times Square Chapters 11 and 12
Journal entries

Loyalty is one quality of a good friend. Describe Mario's loyalty to Chester.

If you could draw a picture of loyalty, what would it look like? Draw your interpretation below.

Appendix H

Little Mermaid Journal

86

Names: Date _____

1st Grader _____

4th Grader _____

Name of Book: _____

Name someone you could tell about the book.

_____ _____

First grader's person Fourth grader's person

What would you teach that person about this book?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

The War with Grandpa — Chapters 36 - 37

Journal entries

Peter learns a lot of lessons that he reflects on in these last two chapters. First, on P.136, he says that, "You shouldn't do what your friends tell you to do... You have to decide what's right or wrong." Write whether you think Peter is right or not and explain why.

Describe how Peter and Grandpa's relationship had changed by the end of the novel. Can you compare their relationship to a similar relationship that you have had? Write about that too.

Beauty and the Beast

Date: **Great Character study**

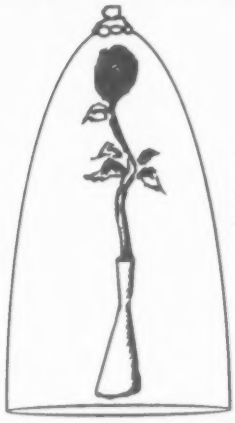
_____

Buddies names:

_____

_____

_____



The character we studied was:

Belle

The Beast

Gaston

Maurice

(Belle's Father)

At the beginning of the story, our character was...
Here is how our character changed by the end of the story.
What di d you learn about yourself and how you face problems?

Human Bingo!

Self-Portrait

Take a good look at yourself. What do you see? After you complete this verbal self-portrait, you should have a more clear and complete view of the person you are at this point in time. Answer each question as honestly as you can; add more paper if you run out of space.

1. What do I look like?

2. What do I like to think about?

3. What do I like about myself?

4. What are my best character traits?
   (Look back at the Character Traits Inventory on page 7.)

5. What traits would I like to develop or strengthen?

6. What scares me the most?
   (Look back at the Fears Inventory on page 8.)

7. What am I most interested in?
   (Look back at the Interests Inventory on page 9.)

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Character Traits Inventory

Read each pair of sentences. Check the ONE from each pair that describes you. Or check BOTH sentences if you believe that you already have a particular trait or quality but would like to develop it further.

1. ___ I have positive attitudes.	___ I'd like to have better attitudes.
2. ___ I'm kind and I care about helping others.	___ I need to be kinder and more caring.
3. ___ I accept responsibility for the choices I make.	___ I want to learn how to accept responsibility for my choices.
4. ___ I'm a good citizen and an involved member of my community.	___ I want to be a better citizen and more involved in my community.
5. ___ I keep my body clean.	___ I need to work on my personal hygiene.
6. ___ I have clean habits and a clean mind.	___ I'd like to have more positive habits, thoughts, and influences.
7. ___ I communicate well with others.	___ I'd like to be a better communicator.
8. ___ I work to conserve things and resources, and I'm thrifty.	___ I need to conserve and save better than I do.
9. ___ I have the courage to do and become what I want to be.	___ I'd like to be more courageous.
10. ___ I have empathy (deep understanding) for others.	___ I need to be more empathetic.
11. ___ I have endurance and patience, even in tough times.	___ I need more endurance and patience.
12. ___ I'm able to forgive others and myself.	___ I want to learn how to forgive more easily.
13. ___ I'm physically, mentally, and emotionally healthy.	___ I want to be more physically, mentally, and emotionally healthy.
14. ___ I'm honest and trustworthy.	___ I need to be more honest and trustworthy.
15. ___ I'm a risk taker, and I have good imagination skills.	___ I'd like to take positive risks more easily or improve my imagination skills.
16. ___ I have integrity. I "walk as I talk."	___ I want to develop my integrity.
17. ___ I'm tolerant and fair with others.	___ I need to be more tolerant and fair.
18. ___ I'm a good leader.	___ I'd like to be a better leader.
19. ___ I'm a good follower.	___ I need to be a better follower.
20. ___ I know when to be loyal and/or obedient.	___ I'd like to be more loyal and/or obedient.
21. ___ I'm a calm and peaceful person.	___ I need to become more calm and/or peaceful.
22. ___ I'm a good problem solver.	___ I want to be a better problem solver.
23. ___ I have direction and purpose in my life.	___ I'd like to have more direction or purpose in my life.
24. ___ I'm friendly and have healthy, positive relationships with others.	___ I'd like to be more friendly and to have better relationships with others.
25. ___ I treat others with respect and courtesy.	___ I need to be more respectful and courteous.
26. ___ I'm responsible and hard-working.	___ I want to develop my sense of responsibility and my work ethic.
27. ___ I practice safety measures in my life.	___ I'd like to be more cautious and safety-conscious.
28. ___ I'm self-disciplined.	___ I want to be more self-disciplined.
29. ___ I have wisdom.	___ I want to develop my wisdom.

Relationships Inventory

For each statement in this inventory, check the box that comes closest to describing how you feel about your relationships.

	Most of the time	Some of the time	Seldom or never
1. Most of my friends seem to like me.	❑	❑	❑
2. My parents respect my opinions.	❑	❑	❑
3. My friends seem to have a good time with me.	❑	❑	❑
4. My brother(s), sister(s) or parents seem to enjoy my company.	❑	❑	❑
5. My peers admire me or look up to me.	❑	❑	❑
6. I enjoy hanging out with my friends.	❑	❑	❑
7. I like my teachers.	❑	❑	❑
8. I feel accepted by my parents.	❑	❑	❑
9. My family doesn't get on my nerves.	❑	❑	❑
10. I'm able to talk with my parent(s) or guardian(s).	❑	❑	❑
11. I don't feel left out of activities with friends.	❑	❑	❑
12. I'm satisfied with the friend(s) I have.	❑	❑	❑
13. My family and I share responsibilities.	❑	❑	❑
14. I'm confident when I am around people my own age.	❑	❑	❑
15. I can share my opinions with my peers.	❑	❑	❑
16. I don't look down on others.	❑	❑	❑
17. I like to talk with older people.	❑	❑	❑
18. I can talk easily with younger children.	❑	❑	❑
19. My parent(s) or guardian(s) seem to understand me.	❑	❑	❑
20. I'm on friendly terms with most people I know in my neighborhood and community.	❑	❑	❑

SCORING: Give yourself 1 point for every check mark in the "Most of the time" column. 2 points for every check mark in the "Some of the time" column. and 3 points for every check mark in the "Seldom or never" column.

Number of "Most of the time" responses: _____ x 1 = _____

Number of "Some of the time" responses: _____ x 2 = _____

Number of "Seldom or never" responses: _____ x 3 = _____

TOTAL _____

Predict-O-Gram
Story: _____

Name _____

What words tell you about where and when the story takes place?	What words tell about the people in the story?	What words describe the problem?
Which words tell you about the actions in this story?	Which words tell how the problem was solved?	Other things.

Stepping On The Cracks
Predict-O-Gram Words

Margaret Baker
patriotism
bully
woods
Elizabeth Crawford
1944
moved to North Carolina
deserter
Gordy Smith
mean
World War II
best friends
crazy man
hiding
Stuart Smith
coward
old abandoned shack
Jimmy Baker
dishonorable discharge
secret
Mr. Smith
black eye
sick
killed in action
doctor
daring
cautious
drunk